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# "INNOCENT"

A Play in a Prologue, Four Acts and an  
Epilogue

BY  
GEORGE BROADHURST

Adapted from the Hungarian of Arpad Pasztor

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## “INNOCENT.”

### CHARACTERS

DENES SIGARY.  
HORACE IRVING.  
OSKAR VON GUGGEN.  
PETER MCCORMICK.  
HIS EXCELLENCY.  
SOKOP.  
ISTVAN KAPOS.  
BELA BETESSEY.  
A PORTER.  
TAN-LO.  
SIN-TSCHU.  
1ST WAITER.  
2ND WAITER.  
SZIDI SOKOP.  
A MAID.  
and  
INNOCENT..

# “INNOCENT.”

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## TIME AND PLACE.

### PROLOGUE.

The present.

A corridor in a hotel in Mukden, Manchuria.

Act I. Two years *previous* to the Prologue. In this instance the action of the play goes *backward*, not forward. A room in the home of Peter McCormick, Mukden.

Act II. Some months later than Act I. A room in the home of Denes, Budapest.

Act III. Some months later than Act. II. The same room.

Act IV. Some months later than Act III. A private dining room in a restaurant in Nice.

### EPILOGUE.

The present; immediately following the Prologue. The same scene as the Prologue.

NOTE: There will be no wait between the Prologue and the First Act nor between the Last Act and the Epilogue.

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# “INNOCENT.”

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## PROLOGUE.

*The scene is the corridor of a hotel in Mukden, Manchuria.*

*The time is about three years ago.*

*It is evening and the electric lights, with blue globes about them, are burning.*

*On the wall is a telephone.*

*When the curtain rises two Chinese servants, SIN-TSCHU and TAN-LO, are discovered playing a game of dice. SIN-TSCHU is shaking three dice in a black leather box. He throws.*

TAN-LO. How many?

SIN-T. (*Counting dice*) Twice four—once two! Ten.

TAN-LO. (*Counting after SIN-T.*) Twice four—once two!—Ten! Not velly hard to count. (*TAN-LO throws*) One five—once four—one three! Twelve. I win. (*SIN-TSCHU counts after TAN-LO, who holds out his hand and SIN-TSCHU pays him a copper coin*) One more time?

SIN-T. One! If I lose him—have no more.

(*TAN-LO hands box to SIN-TSCHU.*)

TAN-Lo. Throw!

(SIN-TSCHU *throws.*)

SIN-T. (*Counting dice*) Once six—once four—once five! Fifteen! Velly good! velly good!

(TAN-Lo *counts dice after SIN-TSCHU.*)

TAN-Lo. That right. (TAN-Lo *shakes dice*)

SIN-T. This time for me! This time for me!

TAN-Lo. Wait. (*He continues to shake the dice*)  
Me velly lucky—and what is to happen—will happen—everything! (*He throws the dice*) Twice five—once six! Sixteen! I win!

(SIN-TSCHU *counts the dice after TAN-Lo and in pantomime shows his anger at being beaten.*  
TAN-Lo *holds out his hand for the money, which SIN-TSCHU reluctantly pays him.*)

SIN-T. You velly lucky! Me not lucky.

TAN-Lo. It is as you are born.

SIN-T. Let us play again.

TAN-Lo. For what?

SIN-T. For the next tip.

TAN-Lo. No matter how much?

SIN-T. No matter.

TAN-Lo. No. If from a German—yes—if from English—yes—if from American—half.

SIN-T. Everything or not at all.

TAN-Lo. I lucky! I win! You know him——

SIN-T. Just same—I play all or nothing.

TAN-Lo. Velly well. The first tip—all—no matter how much.

SIN-T. Yes. (SIN-TSCHU *shakes the dice and is just about to throw when the hotel bell rings outside.* SIN-TSCHU *puts down the box*)

TAN-Lo. A guest—he come.

(*The hotel PORTER enters, followed by DENES. The PORTER carries a man's small hand bag. DENES is not shaved and his clothes, though of good cut and quality, are the worse for wear. The PORTER is English and speaks with a slight Cockney accent.*)

PORTER. You can have room five, sir, or room three, sir.

DENES. Did you say—five?

PORTER. Yes, sir.

DENES. Ha! I'll take that.

PORTER. I think that perhaps three would be a little more comfortable, sir.

DENES. Just the same, I'll take—five.

PORTER. Yes, sir—very good, sir! And your other luggage, sir?

DENES. (*Pointing to bag*) That's all.

PORTER. I'm sorry, sir, but under the circumstances, I know you'll be asked to pay in advance, sir.

DENES. What's the price of—five?

PORTER. With board, sir, twenty-eight dollars, Mexican, by the week, sir. (*DENES takes the money from his pocket-book and hands it to the PORTER*) Thank you, sir. (*DENES gives the PORTER a tip*) Thank you again, sir! I'll get you a receipt for this, sir. (*He indicates the money given him by DENES for his board and gives the bag to SIN-TSCHU, who takes it to room five*) You know, sir, that the rules are not mine, sir. If they were——

DENES. I understand.

PORTER. Yes, sir.

(*SIN-TSCHU re-enters.*)

DENES. Is Mr. Horace Irving still in Mukden?

PORTER. Yes, sir. He's in the Chinese service and lives quite near here.

DENES. Thanks. (*DENES exits to room five*)

PORTER. A queer fish, but he paid up all right! A good tip, too. You never can tell. (PORTER exits)

(The two servants squat again and get ready to play.)

SIN-T. No tip for us.

TAN-Lo. There will be. I know him. He Mister Sigray. Great fliend Mr. McClormick, where I work before I turn Chlistian.

SIN-T. He not know you.

TAN-Lo. He will. You see. (He hands box to SIN-TSCHU) Play.

(DENES appears at the door of his room and watches.)

SIN-T. Not one time—best two times—out of three times.

TAN-Lo. Why—if you are going to lose?

SIN-T. It make it longer—that is what I like!

TAN-Lo. Velly well.

(SIN-TSCHU shakes the dice. There is a pause.)

DENES. What are you playing for?

(SIN-TSCHU stops shaking the dice.)

SIN-T. For next tip.

DENES. The next tip?

SIN-T. Yes. He win everything—so we play for that.

DENES. Good! I like your spirit.

TAN-Lo. How do, Mr. Sigray!

DENES. How do you know me?

TAN-Lo. Me Tan-Lo—work Mr. McClormick! Also see you some time Sunday School. “Love your

neighbor"—“There is but one God!” You know me—Tan-Lo?

DENES. Yes, I remember now! But after Mr. McCormick died and—Innocent came to live with me—I thought you turned Christian and went to the Mission.

TAN-LO. Yes, me turn Chlistian. Look—pigtail gone. (*He takes off his cap and shows that he has no pigtail*) After while mission no good—no give money and plesents—so come here with Sin-Tschu.

DENES. Tell me—in what God do you believe now?

TAN-LO. On Saints days in Chlistian God! On week days—in the old ones. Two Gods better than one—take more care of you. That’s reason I win always from Sin-Tschu. (*To SIN-TSCHU*) Play.

DENES. Just a minute! As I understand it, you are playing for the next tip.

TAN-LO. Yes.

SIN-T. That is it.

DENES. Good! Play for that! (*He throws down his pocket-book. There is a pause*) Play for it.

(*TAN-LO and SIN-TSCHU make a rush for the pocket-book. TAN-LO secures it and opens it. When he sees the money he is astounded. He shows it to SIN-TSCHU.*)

TAN-LO. Look!

SIN-T. (*To DENES*) You mean?

DENES. Yes. Go on.

TAN-LO. No. It is too much! Plenty both of us—we will divide.

DENES. (*To SIN-TSCHU*) What do you say?

SIN-T. I play.

TAN-LO. But it is enough for both—and you will lose.

SIN-T. Still—I play.

DENES. Good for you! And yet, why not! After all everything's a gamble—business, happiness, love, life, everything—and some are born to win and others—to lose—and what is to be—will be.

SIN-T. Come. (*He shakes the dice*)

TAN-Lo. Listen, Sin-Tschu! If we play I shall win—still it is enough—and I will divide. (*Pause*) Well?

SIN-T. I play.

(DENES *laughs*.)

DENES. There's the gambler for you! And I hope you'll win—though I know you won't.

TAN-Lo. It is settled. Two out of three?

SIN-T. Yes!

TAN-Lo. Then play.

(SIN-TSCHU *shakes and throws*. DENES *stands watching*.)

SIN-T. (*Counting*) Twice three—once four! Ten!

(TAN-Lo *shakes and throws*.)

TAN-Lo. Once five—once six—once four—fifteen! I win.

(SIN-TSCHU *throws again*.)

SIN-T. Once one, once five, once three! Nine!

TAN-Lo. Now it is mine! Watch—(TAN-Lo *throws*) Twice two—once four! Eight!

(SIN-TSCHU *laughs*. DENES *exits to room*.)

SIN-T. Not yet yours! Not yet! (SIN-T. *utters a silent prayer, then shakes and throws*. *Counting*) Twice five—once four—Fourteen! Good! Good!

(TAN-Lo takes box and shakes the dice, but before he throws a shot is heard. They stop quickly and remain quiet. There is a pause. TAN-Lo picks up dice and hides pocket-book. There is a pause. The PORTER rushes on.)

PORTER. What is it? What's the matter?

TAN-Lo. (*Pointing*) There.

(*The PORTER enters room five. There is a pause. The PORTER re-enters. In his hand he has a piece of note paper with writing on it.*)

PORTER. He's dead! And this was in his hand. (*He reads*) "Send for Mr. Horace Irving to take charge of my body and tell him to look in my bag." What a scandal for the hotel! But Mr. Irving is in the Chinese service. Perhaps he can help us keep it quiet.

TAN-Lo. Perhaps.

(PORTER goes to 'phone and calls up IRVING.)

PORTER. (*At 'phone*) Hello! Is this Mr. Irving? (*Pause*) A stranger has shot himself, sir, and he left a note to send for you. (*Pause*) Yes. In the hotel. (*Pause*) No. There's no mistake, sir. It is for Mr. Horace Irving. (*Pause*) You'll come? (*Pause*) Thank you, sir. (*Pause*) Will you be long, sir? (*Pause*) That's very good, sir! Good-bye, sir. (*He replaces the 'phone*) He'll be here soon. I'll wait for him. (*There is a pause*)

SIN-T. I count fourteen! You play.

TAN-Lo. No.

SIN-T. You play.

TAN-Lo. No!

SIN-T. Then give me his money! (*Pause*) Give.

(TAN-Lo slowly and deliberately hands the purse

to SIN-TSCHU, who is surprised at TAN-Lo's easy acquiescence and is suspicious that there is something wrong. There is a pause. SIN-TSCHU opens purse and looks at the money. There is a pause.)

TAN-Lo. (*Quietly*) Do not send for me when they put you in prison.

SIN-T. Me—prison?

TAN-Lo. He saw. (TAN-Lo indicates where PORTER exits) They say—you stole.

SIN-T. But he—(*He indicates Room 5*)—gave it.

TAN-Lo. No can prove.

SIN-T. You saw.

TAN-Lo. No one believe! White man do many crazy things—but, give that—no one believe. (*There is a pause*) Remember what I say—when they put you in prison—(*There is a pause. SIN-TSCHU offers purse to TAN-Lo*) No.

SIN-T. But I not want go prison! What I do?

TAN-Lo. Put—there. (TAN-Lo indicates Room 5)

SIN-T. Hide where no one find—then get after?

TAN-Lo. Fool! No. He saw. (*Indicates where PORTER went*) Put him back!

(SIN-TSCHU exits to Room 5. There is a pause.

SIN-TSCHU re-enters.)

SIN-T. I put it on floor—close him.

TAN-Lo. He is lying on floor?

SIN-T. Yes, with knees pull up. Like this—(*Business for SIN-TSCHU*) You look. (*He indicates for TAN-Lo to look in Room 5. TAN-Lo looks in Room 5*)

TAN-Lo. It is like you say.

SIN-T. White people are put in long box and then in the ground.

TAN-Lo. And there they stay—so they tell at

Mission—till last trump sound—then they live again!  
I wonder if *he* live again.

SIN-T. White people know nothing of true God!  
White people not know that death but a moment  
and that after soul rests and is happy.

TAN-Lo. No. If they did they never send——

(PORTER enters followed by IRVING.)

PORTER. He's lying on the floor in there, sir, just  
as he fell.

(IRVING looks into Room 5.)

IRVING. My God, it's Denes! (IRVING enters  
Room 5. Off) Denes! Speak to me! It's Horace!  
Denes! (There is a pause. IRVING re-enters)

PORTER. Dead— isn't he, sir?

IRVING. Yes. He was my friend when I was  
here before. Why, I visited him only three months  
ago at Budapest. And now——!

PORTER. Have you any idea why he did it, sir?

IRVING. I *know* why he did it!

PORTER. In the note he left, sir, he said you were  
to look in his bag.

IRVING. Fetch it.

PORTER. Yes, sir. (PORTER enters Room 5.  
There is a pause. PORTER re-enters) Here's his  
purse as well, sir. (He gives purse to IRVING) The  
bag's very light, sir. He seems to have taken every-  
thing out.

(IRVING opens the bag. From it he takes a small  
diary.)

IRVING. (Reading) "To my friend, Horace  
Irving. The Journal of my Life." Leave me alone,  
please, all of you. I'll call you when I want you.  
(CHINESE and PORTER exeunt. IRVING reads) "My  
dear Horace: When you receive this, though near, I

shall be far away. This journal is now all that remains of my life and I wish you to read it because I realize that I have wronged you and I want you to understand and forgive. I have been weak, I know, but that has really been the extent of my folly, that and the fact that I loved. All that has happened to me in the last three years I have written here and when you have read it I beg that you will forgive me the wrong I did you and think of me only as you knew me during the years of our friendship. Good-bye. (IRVING stops reading, turns toward the stage and says) Denes! Denes!

A QUICK CHANGE IS MADE TO ACT I.

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ACT I.

*The scene is a room in the home of PETER McCORMICK in Mukden.*

*The time is morning about two years earlier than the date of the prologue.*

IRVING is discovered. He is smoking a cigarette and is evidently waiting for some one.

*There is a pause.*

*The door-bell rings.*

TAN-LO enters. He is a Chinese servant, the one seen in the Prologue, but he wears a pigtail. He comes on slowly and without apparent interest.

IRVING. Perhaps that's Mr. Sigary.

TAN-LO. Perhaps! I see. (TAN-LO exits. Off stage) Mr. Irving—he waiting see you.

DENES. (*Off stage*) Very well, Tan-Lo. (DENES enters briskly, followed by TAN-Lo) Sorry I kept you waiting.

IRVING. It's only been two or three minutes.

DENES. I was detained.

IRVING. That's all right.

DENES. Seen McCormick?

IRVING. No. He's sleeping, and as he isn't expecting *me*, I thought I'd wait till you came.

DENES. I see. (*To TAN-Lo*) Has the Doctor been here this morning?

TAN-Lo. No. Not to-day.

DENES. He came last night?

TAN-Lo. Yes. Last night.

DENES. What did he say?

TAN-Lo. Not know what doctor say. Know what Mr. McCormick say.

DENES. Well?

TAN-Lo. He say "Go to Hell" velly plain. Velly—velly plain. "Go to hell—Go to hell."

DENES. Tell Mr. McCormick that Mr. Irving and I have come to see him.

TAN-Lo. I tell—I tell. (*TAN-Lo exits*)

IRVING. McCormick may be ill, but evidently he hasn't lost his spirit.

DENES. He'll never do that. He'll die fighting and cursing to the finish.

IRVING. He's a devil and bad to the marrow, but one can't help liking him.

DENES. I know *I* can't.

IRVING. You're the closest friend he has.

DENES. Yes.

IRVING. Practically the only one.

DENES. Practically.

(*TAN-Lo re-enters.*)

TAN-Lo. In one—two—three minute—he come.

DENES. Very well.

TAN-Lo. Mr. Sigary!

DENES. Yes——

TAN-Lo. You come teach Sunday School again—velly soon?

DENES. I don't know.

TAN-Lo. I like you teach—velly funny, velly funny.

DENES. What's funny?

TAN-Lo. "Love your enemies"—"If fiend hit you this side of face, ask fiend hit you this side of face." Velly funny! Velly funny!

DENES. I see you've not turned Christian yet.

TAN-Lo. Not yet! Good place here, Mr. McClormick. If Mr. McClormick die—and not get 'nother good place—p'laps I turn Chlistian velly soon. P'laps! P'laps! (TAN-Lo *exits*)

IRVING. There's the spirit.

DENES. Yes. He'll turn Christian if McCormick dies and he doesn't get another place.

IRVING. What's really the matter with McCormick?

DENES. Dissipation.

IRVING. Nothing else?

DENES. That and its results!

IRVING. Too bad!

DENES. How long have you known him?

IRVING. Personally since I came out here some nine years ago. I'd heard of him in England long before that, though.

DENES. Soldier, wasn't he?

(IRVING *nods*.)

IRVING. Brilliant young officer in crack Irish regiment.

DENES. Cashiered I believe?

IRVING. Yes.

DENES. Why? (*There is a pause*) Don't tell me if it's only gossip or scandal.

IRVING. There was no secret about it. He got into debt and forged another officer's name. Only his family's position and good of the regiment saved him from prosecution.

DENES. And then he came out here.

IRVING. Not immediately. He was an extremely fascinating and ingratiating man and some houses continued to receive him.

DENES. Well?

IRVING. He repaid the kindness of one of them by eloping with a young daughter, although he had a wife living at the time.

DENES. Innocent's mother I suppose?

IRVING. Innocent?

DENES. McCormick's daughter.

IRVING. Is *that* what he calls her?

DENES. Yes.

IRVING. You're the only man I know who has seen her. I don't know any *woman* who has seen her either for he never *takes* her anywhere and no woman *I* know would come *here*. What is she like?

DENES. Like?

IRVING. Yes. Is she—pretty—for instance?

DENES. To tell the truth I don't know. I've only seen her once or twice and I paid no particular attention to her. (*Slight pause*) What became of the mother?

IRVING. She died in France, I believe, a few months after the girl was born. And, by the way, *what's* to become of the girl?

DENES. I've thought of that. If anything happened to him, don't you think either family would receive her?

IRVING. I'm afraid not. She must be about eighteen now and neither his family nor the mother's has ever set eyes on her! No! Knowing our people as I do, I think there's precious little she can expect from them!

DENES. I see.

IRVING. And if McCormick lives—what then?

DENES. Why?

IRVING. Whatever else she may be, the daughter is a white girl with gentle blood in her veins——!

DENES. Yes.

IRVING. Who has never been allowed to associate with white people; who must be ignorant——!

DENES. No. He's taught her.

IRVING. I mean ignorant of life and the world. That's true, isn't it?

DENES. Absolutely.

IRVING. In a year or two she'll be a woman. Well, what's to become of her? What *can* become of her?

DENES. I don't know. Do you?

IRVING. No.

DENES. It's a dreadful position for her—dreadful!

IRVING. Yes. Another proof that the sins of the fathers——!

(McCORMICK enters, unseen by others.)

McC. Shall be visited on the children. (*He comes down*) Hello Irving!

IRVING. Mr. McCormick——

McC. (*To DENES*) Hello!

DENES. Good morning. I was telling Irving you weren't well and that I was coming to see you and he offered to come too.

McC. Good of him, I'm sure—and I'm feeling better to-day.

IRVING. Splendid.

McC. You were talking about me.

DENES. No.

IRVING. Of course not.

McC. You're liars.

DENES. McCormick!

IRVING. Oh, I say!

McC. You're liars, both of you—and what's more

you *know* it and you know that *I* know it! You were talking about me and—(*He breaks off suddenly*) Tan-Lo! Tan-Lo! Where is that slant-eyed son of a pigtailed father! Tan-Lo! Tan-Lo! (*TAN-Lo rushes on*) Why the devil don't you come when you're called?

TAN-Lo. I come soon—velly, velly soon.

McC. And where are the lights, eh? Where are the lights?

TAN-Lo. Me make! Me make!

McC. You'd better! And be quick about it or that infinitesimal soul of yours will be making a hurried journey to hell! (*He pushes TAN-Lo*) Get on with you!

(*TAN-Lo hurries about lighting the lights. McCORMICK goes up stage to the sideboard.*)

IRVING. (*To DENES*) Lights? (*DENES nods warningly*) But now—in the morning?

DENES. (*To IRVING*) Always.

IRVING. (*To DENES*) Oh!

(*McCORMICK brings down stage some heavy Malaga wine and crystal glasses which he places on the table. TAN-Lo finishes with the lights and exits.*)

McCORMICK. (*Asking IRVING to drink*) Mr. Irving?

IRVING. No, thank you.

McC. It's the gift o' the gods.

IRVING. Not for me.

McC. (*To DENES*) And you?

DENES. No thanks.

McC. Just as you say. But you don't know what you're missing. (*He fills a glass and is about to raise it toward his lips*)

DENES. McCormick——

McC. Eh?

DENES. I—I wouldn't if I were you.

McC. But you're not me. (McCORMICK *laughs and raises it toward his lips*)

DENES. Please, McCormick, please. (McCORMICK *stops and looks at DENES*) You haven't even had breakfast! (*Slight pause*) And remember what the doctor said!

McC. I know! I'm headed straight for death—so what good can it do to break the journey.

DENES. McCormick!

IRVING. Please!

McC. You mean well—I know that—or I'd crack the heads o' both o' you for your damned impertinence. (*He raises the glass*) This is my friend—yes, more than my friend—my lady love! When I'm down on my luck, she cheers me; when the world seems blackest, she smiles on me. Whatever my mood, she understands it and shares it with me; no matter how low I may go, she'll be faithful and stick to me! So—here's to her! (*He drinks. There is a pause. He re-fills the glass*)

DENES. No more now.

McC. Just this one.

IRVING. McCormick!

DENES. Please!

McC. This one and that's all. It's a promise. (*He holds the glass to his nose and sniffs the bouquet in a characteristic manner*) The perfume of it—more fragrant than the lotus blossoms and more delicate than the wild violet that grows in the greenest grass in the greenest country in all the world! And the color of it. Look! (*He holds the glass so that the sunlight streams on it*) What precious stone is as beautiful as that? There's the swaying of ripened wheat, the soft shimmer of wavy blonde hair, the look of worship in glorious gold brown eyes! Small wonder I love it. Small wonder. (*He drinks, then*

*puts the glass down*) You're English, I know, Mr. Irving.

IRVING. Yes.

McC. Well, we'll try not to hold it against you!

IRVING. Thank you.

McC. And what brought *you* out here to the East—to Manchuria?

IRVING. I came as an attache of the Embassy.

McC. And now you're in the Chinese service.

IRVING. Yes, but very soon I'm going back—home.

McC. And you think that in time you'll marry a pink-cheeked, white-frosted girl and be happy ever after, content with the raising of a family, with an occasional glimpse of the sun, with the sight of a cricket game at the Oval once in a while, a night now and then at the play, and when wife has a headache a visit to one of those mausoleums which you English call clubs. That's the idea, isn't it?

IRVING. That's it exactly!

McC. Well, accept my assurance that you won't do it.

IRVING. And why?

McC. Because you've heard the East a calling! That's why. (IRVING *laughs*) You may laugh, but it's the truth just the same.

IRVING. We'll see.

McC. You mean—*you'll* see! (To DENES) I suppose *you* expect to go back as well?

DENES. Yes, to Budapest, the most fascinating city in the world, with its opera, its gaiety and its beautiful women. Of course I expect to go back. If I hadn't expected to, ever since I came here three years ago, I certainly should have sold my little house in the city—yes, and the little farm too—and though the house is mortgaged to the limit, one way or another I've managed to keep them both.

McC. A farm, eh?

DENES. Just a bit of a place—barely enough to

turn round on; still it's mine and ready for me to go to in case I ever get tired of my beloved and beautiful Budapest.

McC. And when do you think you'll go back there?

DENES. In six months or a year perhaps. I wonder if the boys will be glad to see me and if I'll be able to take my old place again in the favorite corner.

McC. And the girls—the sweetheart you left behind? For you did leave one, didn't you?

DENES. She's forgotten me long ago.

IRVING. Then she wasn't the right kind.

DENES. She didn't pretend to be anything that she wasn't. So long as luck was with me and I could give her the things she expected, everything was pleasant and happy, but when the luck turned and went against me——!

McC. She went too.

DENES. In a perfectly satisfactory manner. I was never rich—had just enough to keep me decently as a bachelor if I had been satisfied to let the money remain invested—but I wasn't, and it went—(To McCORMICK) You know how.

(McCORMICK *nods.*)

McC. Gambling.

DENES. Yes. To me there's a thrill in it that nothing else can give.

McC. I've felt it, too, in the days gone by.

DENES. Well, when I couldn't go even an inch further, I laid the matter before my uncle. He devoted two hours of his valuable time to lecturing me on the folly of my ways and finally agreed to send me out here to represent his paper; so I invited her to a little farewell dinner, explained exactly how matters stood, gave her more money than I could afford, and we kissed each other good-bye.

McC. And the matter was ended.

DENES. Yes.

McC. As you say, in a very satisfactory manner.

(*There is a pause*)

IRVING. I'm glad you're feeling better, Mr. McCormick. I came to find out if there's anything I can do for you.

McC. Thank you, but there's not.

IRVING. You're quite sure.

McC. Quite.

IRVING. Then I'll move along. Good-bye.

McC. Good-bye, and thank you again.

IRVING. Not at all! (*To DENES*) Good-bye, old man.

DENES. Good-bye. See you this evening.

IRVING. Certainly! And Mr. McCormick——

McC. Yes.

IRVING. I *shall* find the white-frocksed, pink-cheeked girl and we'll love each other to the very end. You'll see. Good-bye. (*IRVING exits*)

McC. A nice boy, a clean boy, with a young man's idea of love.

DENES. Don't you believe in love?

McC. Believe in it? Once, I'd have died for love of a woman, and she *did* die for love of me. Yes, and she knew me for what I was; she knew I was wrong right through and yet she gave up everything for me—everything! Yes, and she would have lived only she was too delicate, too sensitive for the fight we had to make. She was hurt too much by frigid silences, by the pulling aside of another woman's skirt, by being looked at without being seen! I knew she was slipping away from me and I remembered that Wilde had written "Man always kills the thing he loves" and I hated him for it, hated him with the hate one man always gives another when he tells him the truth he doesn't want to believe! And I said "she shan't die. She shan't. I'll keep her in spite of everything and every body."

But I knew I couldn't—I knew it—even when I said it. (*There is a pause*) You guess who it was.

DENES. Innocent's mother.

McC. Yes. When Innocent came, she wouldn't have died had she been home with her family and her friends—and so—I killed her.

DENES. McCormick!

McC. I did. I killed her as surely as if I'd stabbed her with a knife. (*There is a pause*) And now—there's Innocent! And I've grown to love her—and I wonder. I wonder! (*There is a pause*) The sins of the fathers! (*There is a pause*) The truest thing ever written—but it's hell on the children.

DENES. You mean?

McC. Innocent! She has my blood in her veins.

DENES. She has her mother's blood too.

McC. But suppose mine is the stronger? Suppose she takes after me?

DENES. Really now, McCormick!

McC. That's what I'm afraid of—what I've been fighting all these years! Do you know what my besetting sin was—the fact that I couldn't do without the things that I couldn't afford. I was the son of a poverty-stricken Irish baronet and I had the tastes of an Emperor.

DENES. Has she ever shown—any——!

McC. No. But then she's had no chance. I've kept all knowledge of the world away from her. I've been her only companion. I've selected her books, I've taught her everything she knows. If ever a man tried to keep the mind and heart of his child pure and clean, believe me, I am that man.

DENES. I know it. Then why should you imagine——

McC. Because I'm afraid. I love her! And “Man always kills the thing he loves.” (*He speaks fiercely*) Curse him for saying that. May his soul

rot in hell for it. Curse him and damn him—that's what I say. (*He goes to pour out some wine*)

DENES. McCormick!

McC. (*Stops and looks at him*) Well!

DENES. You promised.

McC. What? Oh, so I did. But just this one?

DENES. No!

McC. Only one! What do you say?

DENES. You promised.

McC. Sure I did. But—! Eh? (*Pause*) Eh?

DENES. No. (*There is a pause*)

McC. Oh! What's a promise more or less when your heart's burning up! (*He starts to pour out the drink*)

DENES. McCormick!! (*There is a pause*)

McC. Oh, very well! (*He puts the glass down*) But I almost got it, didn't I,—eh? (*There is a pause*) And what was I speaking of! (*Pause*) Innocent! Oh, yes! Innocent! Do you know why I've kept her with me all alone? Of course you don't, so I'll tell you. I want her to be happy. But only the contented woman is happy and only the ignorant woman is contented.

DENES. I don't agree with you. Some of the happiest women I've known were well read and charming.

McC. But still they were ignorant—ignorant of the world and of life. They knew only their own little circle! And they were religious women, too, weren't they?

DENES. Yes.

McC. That's the kind that *are* happy and that's the kind I want Innocent to be. I'm not a religious man myself, as you may know, but I've taught it all to Innocent from baptism to hell fire and she believes it. You shall see. (*He calls*) Innocent! Innocent, darling! Innocent!

(INNOCENT enters in Chinese dress.)

INNOCENT. Good morning, father! (*There is a pause. McCORMICK kisses her*)

McC. Good morning, my cup o' joy.

INNOCENT. (*To DENES*) Good morning.

DENES. Good morning!

McC. Did you sleep well, child?

INNOCENT. Yes, father.

McC. And you're happy?

INNOCENT. Yes! Very.

McC. *Very* happy, are you?

INNOCENT. Yes, father.

McC. And *why* are you so very happy? (*Pause*)  
Why? (*Pause*) Tell me, dear, why?

INNOCENT. Because you called me while Mr. Sigary is here.

McC. And *that* makes you *very* happy?

INNOCENT. Yes. There's some one to talk to.

McC. (*In a low tone*) I see.

INNOCENT. Don't be displeased with me.

McC. I'm not, child.

INNOCENT. Except you, Mr. Sigary is the only European I know.

DENES. I'm honored.

McC. And you think it's time you knew some others. Don't you?

INNOCENT. If you wish me to.

McC. And if I don't wish you to. What then?

INNOCENT. I'll be good. (*He takes her face between his hands and looks into her eyes*)

McC. I hope you'll always be good, child; always! (*He kisses her. There is a pause*)

INNOCENT. But I do wish I knew some other Europeans. It's so lonely.

McC. You have your books—and your music.

INNOCENT. They can't talk to you and tell you——! (*She stops*)

McC. What, child? (*Pause*) What?

INNOCENT. The things you want to know.

McC. And what is it *you* want to know?

INNOCENT. Everything! About the world—and the people—why some are poor, and others rich—and why some of them are sad—and others laugh—when they go past my window.

McC. That's the riddle of the universe and no man's been able to answer it.

INNOCENT. It must be dreadful to be poor and sad. *I want to be merry, and laugh. There's something here—(She puts her hands to her breast. There is a pause)* Father, is it wrong to want to laugh—and be happy—and have pretty things. Is it?

McC. No, child!

INNOCENT. I'm glad. Because I want it very much! *(Pause)* There are many things I've wanted lately and some of them I don't understand. I want to sing—and dance—and go out into the world and—and——!

McC. And—what?

INNOCENT. I don't know. That's the part I don't understand. *(There is a pause. McCORMICK turns away)* Have I said anything I shouldn't? *(Pause)* Have I?

McC. No.

INNOCENT. I'm glad.

DENES. Such feelings are perfectly natural.

INNOCENT. Are they?

DENES. Yes. It's the spirit of youth, that's all. *(To McCORMICK)* Isn't it?

McC. Perhaps.

INNOCENT. And I may think about them all I please? Of the things I've read and seen pictures of? Of men in their evening clothes and big fur coats, of wonderful dances where the beautiful ladies are dressed European style and have perfumes in their hair and necklaces of diamonds and ropes of pearls, and where they——!

McC. Stop! Stop, I tell you! Such things are not for you and never will be.

INNOCENT. And I mustn't think about them?

McC. You must put all such thoughts out of your head. Promise me you will. Promise me.

INNOCENT. Yes, father!

McC. I'm poor, and you're poor, and those things are for the rich! And often the men who give them have stolen them and the women have sold their souls for them, and for it they'll go down to hell fire and torment everlasting and you don't want that, do you?

INNOCENT. Oh, no! (*Pause*) But it must be wonderful to have them.

McC. I love you, child. You know that.

INNOCENT. Yes, father.

McC. Then let these words sink down deep into your soul. By the love I bear you, by the love your mother bore you when she gave up her life for you, don't set your heart on worldly things, for if you do it will bring sorrow and misery and death, not only to you but to those who know you and love you! Remember that—always!

INNOCENT. I will, father! (*INNOCENT begins to cry very softly*)

DENES. I think you're taking the matter too seriously.

McC. I'm not. It's written! It's inevitable! Don't cry, child. I didn't mean to hurt you.

INNOCENT. But I was so happy—with my dreams—and now—I mustn't have them any more. (*There is a pause*) And I thought—if I had beautiful clothes—perhaps—I might be beautiful, too—and then I—I——

McC. What?

INNOCENT. I don't know.

McC. Put such things out of your head for they mean misery and death, I tell you—misery and death!

INNOCENT. I will. I'll be good. (*There is a pause*)

McC. She's like her mother—so much like her! If only she—(*He takes her in his arms*) Well, I've done my best. God knows I've done my best. (*He*

*kisses her. There is a pause*) Breakfast can't be long now. Let me know when it's ready.

INNOCENT. Yes, father. (*INNOCENT exits. There is a pause*)

McC. I lose!

DENES. Lose?

McC. She's my child. It's in the blood.

DENES. You take the matter entirely too seriously, I tell you. She don't say or suggest one single thing that an ordinary girl in the same circumstances wouldn't. (*There is a pause*) Besides, the child's so much alone, how can she help dreaming! And why shouldn't her thoughts go to pretty clothes and such things, every other girl's do? Why shouldn't they? Come now, tell me! Why? (*There is a pause*) Isn't it the natural thing? (*Pause*) Well, isn't it? (*There is a pause*) Of course it is. You're morbid on the subject. You've thought too much about it and it's got on your nerves. That's all there is to it.

McC. I hope you're right.

DENES. I know I'm right.

McC. And now I must tell you why I asked you to come to see me this morning.

DENES. Yes.

McC. The end of the journey's in sight for me.

DENES. It's not so bad as that.

McC. It is. I know it even better than the doctor, and when I've crossed the mark, there'll be no one to care for Innocent—but you.

DENES. Me?

McC. You! (*There is a pause*) You'll do it?

DENES. I don't know. It's so unexpected.

McC. There's no one else.

DENES. But I—I wouldn't know what to do. I've never even had a sister.

McC. Keep her out of the big world, that's all. Let her marry some clean young chap who has a farm somewhere, or a business in a small town. The city

is not for her. Remember that. (*There is a pause*)  
You will?

DENES. I don't want to promise now. I must think it over.

McC. You'll do it. I know you will! I couldn't rest easy in my grave if I wasn't sure of it.  
(INNOCENT *re-enters*) And so we'll——!

INNOCENT. Breakfast is ready, father.

McC. Very well, child. (*To DENES*) Will you join us?

DENES. No thanks. I breakfasted some time ago.

McC. You'll come and see me to-morrow, about the same time?

DENES. Yes.

McC. It's a promise?

DENES. Yes.

McC. Then good-bye! (*McCORMICK puts out his hand. DENES takes it*)

DENES. Good-bye! (*DENES starts to go*)

INNOCENT. Good-bye, Mr. Sigary.

DENES. Oh, good-bye, Innocent, good-bye.  
(*DENES exits. There is a pause*)

(*McCORMICK takes INNOCENT's face in his hands and gazes into her eyes. Then he puts his arm lovingly about her and they exeunt.*)

## CURTAIN ON ACT I.

## ACT II.

*The living room in the home of DENES, in Budapest.*

*The time is about a year later than the previous scene and it is night.*

DENES *is discovered unpacking a trunk. He is in a gay humor.*

*There is a pause.*

*The door-bell rings.*

GRETE, a servant girl, crosses and exits to hall as if to open door.

DENES stands listening.

SZIDI. (*Off*) Is Mr. Sigray at home?

GRETE. (*Off*) Yes, madam.

DENES. (*To himself*) Good Lord!

SZIDI. (*Off*) Then I'll come in. I know the way.

(SZIDI enters) Hello!

DENES. Oh, hello, Szidi.

(GRETE crosses and exits. SZIDI goes to him and offers her hand, which he takes.)

SZIDI. (*Coquettishly*) Aren't you glad to see me?

DENES. Why yes, of course I am.

SZIDI. You're not very enthusiastic about it.

DENES. I'm so surprised. After six years too. I had no idea whether you were here in Budapest, or where you were. And now you drop in just as——!

SZIDI. Just as I used to do. Eh? (*There is a pause*)

DENES. How did you know I had returned?

SZIDI. Saw it in this afternoon's paper. Got back last night, didn't you?

DENES. Yes.

SZIDI. You haven't changed much. And you're looking decidedly better than you did when you left.

DENES. I am better.

SZIDI. The room hasn't changed at all. When you get these trunks out of the way, it will look just as it did. (*She looks about*) Your study and workroom where you never worked. (*Opening a door*) Your

bedroom which never saw you till daylight! And this room—— (*She starts to open the other door*)

DENES. Stop.

(*SZIDI turns.*)

SZIDI. What's the matter?

DENES. You can't go in there.

SZIDI. Why not?

DENES. You can't—that's all.

SZIDI. Why? Is there a girl there?

DENES. No.

SZIDI. Then what's the harm? (*SZIDI goes as if to open the door*)

DENES. (*Sharply*) Szidi!

SZIDI. You silly boy, I'm not jealous. You don't suppose I expected you to be true to *me* for *six* years. (*There is a pause*) Your—sweetheart?

DENES. No! Certainly not!

SZIDI. Who, then?

DENES. A girl whose father died. I have taken his place.

SZIDI. I'd like to meet her.

DENES. She's gone to the opera.

SZIDI. With the English friend the paper said came with you?

DENES. Yes.

SZIDI. Some other time then?

DENES. I'm afraid not.

SZIDI. Why? (*There is a pause*) Why?

DENES. She isn't—your kind!

SZIDI. And—what *is* my kind?

DENES. Please.

(*SZIDI laughs.*)

SZIDI. You get frightened too easily, Denes! And you're wrong about my kind. I'm married now!

DENES. Married!

SZIDI. Yes.

DENES. And does your husband know about—us?

SZIDI. Of course not. He doesn't know anything about anybody. He's a schoolmaster!

DENES. He is?

SZIDI. From the country! And he worships me—and thinks I'm the most wonderful being in the world! And all the other professors are envious and all their wives are jealous. I'm a new kind of creature and they haven't been able to classify me. I'm a butterfly among a lot of beetles.

DENES. Beetles?

SZIDI. Yes. They have long faces, still use whale-bone corsets, dress in black silk and wear red flannel petticoats. They're beetles, I tell you; and their husbands are beetles; and *my* husband is a beetle, and he'd never associated with or even *talked* to a butterfly till he met me, and the first time he saw my pretty lace brasier with the baby-blue ribbons—! Tell me, Denes, why *do* men always go crazy over baby-blue?

DENES. I didn't know that they did.

SZIDI. Well, they do—that and pink—particularly a bright, but innocent pink.

DENES. I don't know anything about that. But this I do know—I think your beetle of a husband would object very strenuously to your coming here to visit another butterfly at this time of night.

SZIDI. Why? Why shouldn't I come to visit a relative?

DENES. Relative!

SZIDI. Yes. You're my cousin; my kind, considerate and generous cousin.

DENES. See here, Szidi, I don't like——!

SZIDI. Being a poor but honest working girl, no matter how industrious I was, I couldn't earn the money to buy the pretty dresses and underclothes and rings and things that I had, now could I? Of course not! And so you, my dear cousin in China, sent the

money to me. You don't know what a kind and liberal cousin you are, and so I came to tell you.

DENES. Your being married makes a lot of difference and I don't like your coming here.

SZIDI. *This time I had to come. He read of your arrival too, and when he came home he quite naturally wanted to come and thank you for your kindness to his dear little wife. As I had no objection ready, I fell in with his plans, but arranged matters so that I came on ahead and he is going to call for me. It took some quick thinking, I tell you! Ah, men little know the trouble we women have, to keep our husbands happy!*

DENES. He's—coming here?

SZIDI. Yes.

DENES. Then don't you think I'd better know something about you—how long you've been married, your name and a few such details as that?

SZIDI. Of course. I've been married nearly two years and my name is Sokop! Isn't that a funny name? Sokop—(*She laughs*) Imagine me as *Mrs. Sokop*. (*She laughs again. The door-bell rings*) Perhaps that's Joseph now.

DENES. Joseph——

SZIDI. My husband.

DENES. Oh!

(GRETE crosses as if to answer bell.)

SZIDI. (*In an entirely different manner*) I do hope that's my dear husband. He's just the nicest, sweetest man. And he's so anxious to meet you, cousin. He——!

BETESSEY. (*Off*) Hello, Denes!

KAPOS. (*Off*) Here we are!

DENES. Yes.

SZIDI. Just like old times, isn't it?

(BETESSEY and KAPOS enter. They do not see SZIDI.)

KAPOS. Denes, old boy! My, but I'm glad to see you!

DENES. Same here, Bela. (*They shake hands*)

BETESSEY. Welcome home! (*Shake hands*)

DENES. Are you *really* glad to see me back?

BETESSEY. Indeed we are!

KAPOS. All of us.

SZIDI. What about me? You haven't seen *me* for a long time *either*.

(*BETESSEY and KAPOs turn and see SZIDI.*)

BETESSEY. Szidi!

KAPOS. Who would have thought it!

(*They cross and shake hands with SZIDI.*)

KAPOS. Now it *is* like old times.

DENES. Are things changed very much?

KAPOS. Not at all. It's just as though you were here yesterday or had never been away. Your place is still waiting for you at the club——!

DENES. Good!

KAPOS. And everyone will be delighted to see you there again——every one!

DENES. I'm glad.

KAPOS. Let's dine together to-morrow night.

BETESSEY. Yes.

DENES. Splendid! The old four—we three and Harrer. You'll arrange with Harrer, won't you? (*There is a pause*) What's the matter?

KAPOS. Haven't you heard?

DENES. No.

KAPOS. Harrer is in Brazil.

BETESSEY. He *had* to leave.

SZIDI. Gambling!

DENES. I see.

KAPOS. He did nothing dishonorable, but he got in too deeply.

DENES. As all gamblers do at one time or another.

KAPOS. He sold everything, but even that wasn't—quite—enough, so the rest was—arranged—and he went to Brazil.

SZIDI. It should be a lesson to all of you.

DENES. I've had *my* lesson! You all know that it wasn't for pleasure that I went to Manchuria. I was in Harrer's position exactly.

KAPOS. Only *you* had relatives.

DENES. It was all that saved me! Well, when I got to Manchuria I thought I should have to come back quickly or die. But I didn't. I stayed and learned how to live.

BETESSEY. Out there?

DENES. Yes. The art of living is to rejoice—rejoice over little things. There men take example from the ants. No one works only for himself. Each man has his duty to do and does it and when his time comes—he goes, and he is buried in front of his own house, or in the garden where he lived or where the others live. That's all! To him death isn't sorrowful, death isn't the end! Like birth, it is only the beginning, only a moment.—why worry about it? Out there I learned not to take either life or myself too seriously. I learned the joy of—restfulness.

SZIDI. Well, I'm not an ant. I'm a butterfly. What about me?

BETESSEY. Yes.

DENES. We are no longer of the same class. Each must live his own life his own way.

KAPOS. Does that include—us? (*He indicates BETESSEY and himself*)

DENES. Yes. (*Pause*) I thought I wanted to come back to the old life; I find that I don't! And, besides—I'm afraid.

KAPOS. Afraid?

DENES. Yes.

KAPOS. Of what?

DENES. Of what has happened to Harrer! You all know that, once started, I'm a much more desperate gambler than he is. As some men get drunk on wine, I get drunk on cards. Given a little luck, I simply can't stop playing. I have to go on, and the result is always the same! Boys, I thank you for your welcome and I'm delighted to see you, delighted from the bottom of my heart, but I'm weak—and I know it—so I have made up my mind that the old life is over for me. I am going to keep myself out of temptation.

KAPOS. Perhaps you are right.

DENES. I know I am.

BETESSEY. What will you *do*?

SZIDI. Yes.

DENES. I've a little farm in the country. I'll live there.

SZIDI. I can see you!

DENES. That's what I'm going to do! And I'm sure I shall be happier there——!

*(The door-bell rings.)*

SZIDI. There's my husband now.

*(GRETE goes to open door.)*

KAPOS. Your husband?

SZIDI. Certainly.

BETESSEY. Well, what do you think of that?

DENES. She's been married nearly two years and, in honor of her husband's arrival, I'll make some tea.

SZIDI. This time of night!

DENES. I've just come from China you know. Besides, this is a special brand and I'm sure you'll like it. *(DENES goes up stage to prepare the tea)*

*(SOKOP enters followed by GRETE who crosses and exits. SZIDI goes to SOKOP.)*

SZIDI. Joseph——

SOKOP. Darling—(*He kisses her*)

(SZIDI takes him down stage to present him to  
KAPOS and BETESSEY.)

SZIDI. My husband—(*Indicating KAPOs*) This gentleman is——!

SOKOP. I know. Don't tell me.

SZIDI. But, dearest——!

SOKOP. Kindness and benevolence are written on his face. This is dear, kind Denes. How do you do!  
(*He extends his hand*)

KAPOS. Excuse me, but I am not Denes.

SOKOP. No.

SZIDI. That gentleman's name is Kapos. I was just going to tell you.

SOKOP. Then *this* is Cousin Denes—(*He offers his hand to BETESSEY*)

BETESSEY. My name is Betessey.

SOKOP. Really.

(DENES comes down.)

DENES. I am Denes.

(SOKOP turns and sees DENES.)

SOKOP. Of course you are. I am glad to meet you, Cousin Denes. (*He offers his hand which DENES takes*)

(SZIDI, KAPOs and BETESSEY are on one side of the stage. DENES and SOKOP on the other.)

KAPOS. (*To SZIDI*) Cousin?

SZIDI. (*To KAPOs*) Ssh! Ssh!!

SOKOP. I shall never be able to thank you sufficiently for all your kindness to my dear little wife.

DENES. Not at all.

KAPOS. (*To SZIDI, in a whisper*) What's the idea?

SZIDI. (*To KAPOS*) Keep still.

SOKOP. To be good to her while you were here was a great virtue, but to think of her while you were so far away, and to remit to her regularly and generously—Ah, that was virtue indeed.

DENES. Any man would have done as much for—his cousin.

KAPOS. (*To SZIDI and BETESSEY*) I see.

SOKOP. Pardon me, if I dispute that assertion. It does great credit to your kindness of heart, but it shows that you do not know the world and human nature.

DENES. Really, Mr. Sokop, I——!

SOKOP. Call me "Cousin Joseph!"

DENES. Well——er——!

SOKOP. Please! "Cousin Joseph!"

DENES. Cousin Joseph!

SOKOP. Thank you!

KAPOS. I have known your wife for some time.

SOKOP. How interesting.

(DENES goes up and makes the tea.)

BETESSEY. So have I.

KAPOS. May I ask how you come to meet?

SOKOP. We lived in the same house—on the same floor. One afternoon—having returned home earlier than usual, I passed her door. It was open. She was combing her hair—and I saw her—and—she became my wife.

KAPOS. *Very* interesting.

BETESSEY. *Very*.

SZIDI. You haven't regretted it either, have you, dearest?

SOKOP. Not for a moment. I have but one wish now—one desire. I should like to hear her called "Wife of the Director."

KAPOS. Perhaps she *will* be some day.

SOKOP. I am now forty-five and the director is sixty-five. If he should happen to retire! or if he died—just for my sake——

SZIDI. Isn't he sweet!

BETESSEY. He is indeed.

(DENES comes down.)

DENES. Will you have a cup of tea with me?

SOKOP. I should like to—very much—but——!

SZIDI. This is Thursday and he has to correct his school work.

SOKOP. Yes.

DENES. I'm sorry.

SZIDI. We'll come some other time though, won't we, dearest?

SOKOP. With great pleasure! (*To BETESSEY*) Good-bye, sir!

BETESSEY. Good-bye, Mr. Sokop. (*They shake hands*)

SOKOP. (*To KAPO*s) Good-bye.

KAPOS. Good-bye!

SZIDI. Good-bye, everybody!

KAPOS and BETESSEY. Good-bye.

SOKOP. (*To DENES*) Good-bye, Cousin Denes. (*He gives his hand to DENES*) There are some good relatives in the world after all. (*To SZIDI*) Come, dear. (*He places her arm in his. They exeunt*)

(DENES goes to exit as if to see them off. There is a pause. The door closes. KAPOs and BETESSEY laugh. DENES comes down.)

BETESSEY. That was splendid!

KAPOS. No one but a woman could have done it.

DENES. I'm sorry for him. He lives in a dream. Suppose he were ever awakened.

KAPOS. I don't pity him. Just think what Szidi

has done for him. Till he met her he'd known only that class of good women to whom goodness is a synonym for drabness. Now he has in his home a nice, amiable, sweet-smelling, joy-giving woman. He's ignorant—yes—but he's lucky—he's damn lucky—he's *happy*!

DENES. So is the opium smoker—while he can get the drug.

KAPOS. We won't quarrel over it! And to show that I'm still your friend, whenever you wish it, I'll introduce you to the prettiest girl you ever saw——

DENES. No, thanks.

KAPOS. She's just your style and——!

DENES. No! I meant all that I said about living in the country—every word of it.

(IRVING and VON GUGGEN enter.)

IRVING. See who insisted on coming with me.

VON G. (*To DENES*) How do you do! You remember me, of course.

DENES. Certainly! Quite well! Only I regret to say I don't exactly recall——!

VON G. Manchuria! Four years ago.

DENES. Of course! Von Guggen! Of the German Embassy.

VON G. Precisely! How do you do! (VON GUGGEN *gives* DENES *his hand*)

DENES. Glad to see you again.

IRVING. I wonder that you remember him at all. He left so soon after you came.

VON G. Some men are born to be forgotten—some to be remembered.

IRVING. And you are one of the latter.

VON G. You have said it.

DENES. (*To KAPOs and BETESSEY*) Let me present my friend, Mr. Irving! Horace, Mr. Kapos, Mr. Betessey. (*They acknowledge the introduction*) And this gentleman is Mr. Von Guggen. (*They*

*acknowledge the introduction*) Where is Innocent?

IRVING. Hearing voices and not knowing whether she should come in or not, she went to her room.

KAPOS. And who is Innocent?

DENES. A girl of whom I have taken her charge.

VON G. And such a girl! I am for my own pleasure and adventure taking a trip around the world. Three days ago I was at the races at Liverpool and this evening at the opera in Budapest. Between the acts there was the buzz of conversation and the leveling of opera glasses which bespeak the presence of a personage. I looked to see what was to be seen and I beheld a girl—the most exquisite creature in the world—a perfect vision of unspoiled loveliness.

DENES. Oh, come!

VON G. I repeat—a perfect vision of unspoiled loveliness! Well, if I may say so, I am in some things fortunate, particularly with women—(IRVING *coughs deprecatingly*) There is no vanity about it. I am simply stating a fact. With cards and women I am fortunate. It is no credit to me. I was born so! Even in this case my luck did not desert me for the girl's escort was my old acquaintance here, whom I had not seen for years. Naturally I go to him. Naturally I seek and obtain an introduction, then I find that you have returned and are the young lady's guardian. So I insist that I be brought here to renew our acquaintance, and here I am.

BETESSEY. Quite a romantic re-union!

KAPOS. Yes. (*To DENES*) Did I understand you to say the young lady's name was Innocent?

DENES. Yes.

IRVING. It was her father's name for her.

VON G. Her *name* may be Innocent, but I know women and I assure you that beneath that calm manner and under that white skin there is a passion and a power of which you have never dreamed and of which she is only faintly aware. Once it is aroused.

once she knows herself, the world will be all too small for her.

DENES. That is where you are mistaken. A little Hungarian country home will be large enough for her.

VON G. You are in error, my friend. The diamond of Nisam can be worn only by a prince; no peasant buries it in his straw.

DENES. Just the same it will be exactly as I have said. I am going to take her to the country and marry her to some steady, good young man. It was her father's wish.

VON G. Her father! There was a man for you. What was that song he used to sing when he was half drunk? It went something like this. (VON GUGGEN *tries to sing it, but doesn't quite catch the air*)

DENES. Wasn't this it? (DENES *goes to the piano and plays and sings the song. The other men go to piano. HORACE and VON GUGGEN sing the chorus with him. INNOCENT appears. DENES sings another verse. All three start the chorus. INNOCENT joins in chorus. KAPOs and BETESSEY stand staring at her. The others stop singing and look at INNOCENT, who finishes the chorus alone*)

DENES. Innocent!

INNOCENT. Please don't be angry with me.

VON G. Of course he will not.

INNOCENT. I heard the song and had to come. I couldn't help it. It brought back—memories.

DENES. And memories are beyond our power! Let me present my friends, Mr. Kapos and Mr. Betessey! This is Innocent.

(*They acknowledge the introduction.*)

KAPOs. You swindler. You spoke of her as if she were a child.

DENES. She is a child.

INNOCENT. But please—I am not. I am a young woman.

IRVING. She liked the opera immensely.

INNOCENT. I loved it. I adored it.

DENES. Isn't the jewel song wonderful?

IRVING. It wasn't Faust. The prima donna was ill and the bill was changed to Carmen.

DENES. That's too bad. Innocent wouldn't understand that character at all.

INNOCENT. But I did—every word—every thought. Why shouldn't I?

VON G. Exactly. Why shouldn't she? (*Pause*) Eh? Why shouldn't she?

DENES. She only *thinks* she understood.

INNOCENT. I *know* I did.

DENES. (*To KAPOs and BETESSEY*) You see, this is the first party Innocent has ever had.

INNOCENT. Dinner—with champagne!

DENES. Horace!

IRVING. Only a little.

INNOCENT. And the opera! The music was wonderful. It got right into my blood. I loved every strain of it. And between the acts, when the lights were up, the dresses, the jewels, the beautiful women, the men——!

VON G. They were staring at you.

IRVING. She didn't know that.

INNOCENT. Oh, but I did!

IRVING. You didn't show it.

INNOCENT. Why should I?

VON G. Precisely. Why should she? Eh? Why shouldn't she!

INNOCENT. It was exquisite—wonderful—no matter how long I may live I shall never forget to-night.

VON G. And this is only Budapest. You should see a performance in London during the season, or in Paris at a great first night, or in Monte Carlo, during the Carnival.

INNOCENT. I wonder if I ever shall!

VON G. Of course you will.

DENES. We mustn't be too sure. Such things are for the rich and the great.

INNOCENT. And yet——!

DENES. What?

INNOCENT. Nothing.

KAPOS. (*To BETESSEY*) I think it's time for us to go.

(INNOCENT *is with* IRVING.)

BETESSEY. It *is* late.

KAPOS. Good night, Denes.

DENES. Good night.

KAPOS. You lucky dog! If I were in your place, I'd go to the country too!

DENES. Don't be absurd!

KAPOS. No wonder you're willing to give up the gay life. I would too, for awhile.

DENES. Don't joke on that subject, please. You don't understand.

KAPOS. Of course not. Good night again.

BETESSEY. Good night.

(IRVING *and* INNOCENT *come into the scene.*)

VON G. (*To* DENES) I'll stay a little longer if you don't mind.

DENES. Certainly. (*To* IRVING) What about you?

IRVING. I think I'll move along. Still I'd *like* to stay and hear Von Guggen's reminiscences. I could remind him of one or two he has probably forgotten.

VON G. I have forgotten nothing! But what is past—is past! And what is in the future—is in the future.

KAPOS. (*To* IRVING) Come with us to the club.

BETESSEY. Do.

IRVING. It's very kind of you.

KAPOS. And you'll come——

IRVING. Yes.

KAPOS. Good!

BETESSEY. (*To INNOCENT*) Till we meet again.

KAPOS. (*To INNOCENT*) I was—and remain—delighted to have met you.

INNOCENT. Thank you. Good night. (*To BETESSEY*) Good night.

IRVING. Good night, Innocent!

INNOCENT. Good night—Mr. Irving.

KAPOS. Come along.

DENES. I'll go to the door with you.

KAPOS. Splendid! I have one or two stories I'm sure you haven't heard. You'll like them too! Here's one! One day a little stenographer was asked by her employer, a man in the railroad world, if she——!

(DENES, IRVING, KAPOs and BETESSEY *exeunt*. *The door is closed after them.*)

VON G. This is the moment I have been hoping for. You are the most beautiful of all the beings in the world!

INNOCENT. Mr. Von Guggen!

VON G. You are, I tell you! Of all the wonderful women at the opera to-night, there was not one who with you could be compared.

INNOCENT. They were beautiful.

VON G. Yes. Some with the cold beauty of the lily! Some with the delicate beauty of the wild violet; others with the fragrant beauty of the full blown rose. But yours—yours is the beauty that surpasses them all—the fascinating beauty of the flower for which men travel thousands of miles, through dangerous, unknown country, through swamps and forests and unexplored rivers, risking the chance of fever—yes, even of death in a *thousand* terrifying forms—yours is the beauty of the orchid.

INNOCENT. Am I really as beautiful as that?

VON G. That, and more. Your eyes are deep as a crater in which fire burns——

INNOCENT. Deep as a crater——

VON G. Your skin is like the glossy gardenias in the tea houses——

INNOCENT. Like the glossy gardenias——

VON G. Pleasure, dancing and music are natural longings springing from your heart. You are marvelously beautiful—marvelously. (*The men laugh off stage*) Why did the men all stare at you in the theatre to-night—at the restaurant—! (INNOCENT *looks at him*) I was not there, but I know that they did. Your dress is simple, your manner modest—then why did they stare? Why?

(*There is a pause.*)

INNOCENT. Tell me.

VON G. Because nature has bestowed on you the greatest gift she can give to a woman—the beauty which attracts without design, which compels without effort, which receives without demanding. Of all the men who looked at you to-night, was there a single one who would not have followed you, had you even so much as raised your eyes to him? Was there? Eh? There was not and you know it—don't you? Don't you? (*Pause*) Of course you do. (*There is another laugh off stage and "Good"—"That is funny", etc., are heard*) Listen! We are born for what we are born. I came into the world to be an adventurer, an *artist* among adventurers—you came to be——!

INNOCENT. What? (*Pause*) What?

VON G. To span the whole octave of life—to have power over men.

INNOCENT. Like—Carmen?

VON G. No. Like DuBarry—like Pompadour—like Cleopatra.

INNOCENT. Like—that?

VON G. Like that! You were born to be a high priestess in one of the most noble temples in the world, and to have the greatest in the land offering you on bended knees their most precious gifts! And you feel it—you know it. That's true, isn't it—Eh? Isn't it? *(There is a pause. She moves away. He follows her)* This man says he is going to take you to the country, which shows that he is a fool! You belong to a large city, just as jewels of great value belong to the world. You were born for splendor; to go about in handsome motors with liveried servants; to wear beautiful gowns; to sit in opera boxes——!

INNOCENT. And have necklaces of diamonds and ropes of pearls!

VON G. That's it! That's it—exactly. *(He laughs)*

*(There is a pause.)*

INNOCENT. Suppose Denes insists upon my going to the country.

VON G. Dissuade him.

INNOCENT. How?

VON G. Try it and you won't have to be told the way. He's only—a man! *(There is a pause. There is another laugh off stage and "Good-nights" can be heard)* He is coming. Remember what I have told you. *(He kisses her hand, not passionately, but as a tribute from one artist to another)*

*(DENES enters.)*

DENES. Just heard some new stories! Funny ones, too!

VON G. That is good!

DENES. *(To INNOCENT)* Have a nice chat?

INNOCENT. Yes.

DENES. About what?

VON G. Oh, of Mukden——

DENES. Mukden?

INNOCENT. Yes! and the funny Chinese, and the stout Mandarins, and how they sit in their litters, and how men run in front and behind them with red feather fans!

(VON G. *laughs.*)

DENES. What are you laughing at?

VON G. At our chat—about the Mandarins—and the funny Chinese! She has a wonderful memory and learns very quickly. But then—blood will tell.

DENES. It's quite late, dear. You'd better say good-night to Mr. Von Guggen and go to bed.

INNOCENT. Good-night. (*She gives him her hand*)

VON G. Good-night.

DENES. Sleep well.

INNOCENT. Thank you.

(INNOCENT *goes toward exit, then stops. There is a pause.*)

DENES. What is it?

INNOCENT. I was thinking of our talk—about Mukden, and the Mandarins and the funny Chinese.

(INNOCENT *exits.*)

VON G. You lucky dog!

DENES. What do you mean?

VON G. Why—Innocent, of course! You lucky dog!!

DENES. What *are* you talking about?

VON G. About you—and her—living here—alone! *That's* what I'm talking about.

DENES. Von Guggen!

VON G. You're a sly one! You leave Mukden and intend to take her to the country, do you?

You're like the fellow who stole the Mona Lisa from the Louvre. He showed excellent taste; it was the best thing there.

DENES. Have *all* the people here gone mad! What the devil do you mean by talking about this child and me?

VON G. Child! Ha!

DENES. She's a child so far as I am concerned. I feel like a father toward her.

VON G. But, you are not her father—nor even her brother. You are a man—that's all—you are just a man.

DENES. There, speak Europe and civilization!

VON G. Exactly! We *are* civilized, and a man of your age—why, you are not yet forty—cannot live here alone with a beautiful girl to whom he is in no way related, without there being gossip and scandal. Many men have tried it—but it can't be done—not even in the country.

DENES. Yes, that's civilization! In China it was perfectly proper that she should be with me—that I should take care of her. We lived under the same roof for nearly six months and there wasn't a suggestion, or even a thought, that there was anything wrong about it, but here every one attributes an evil motive to me.

VON G. Because conditions are different. She grew up there and every one understood—the matter was familiar. Over there a Chinese woman in native dress would attract no attention; here the same woman would excite both interest and curiosity! In India the Lotos flower is common and consequently disregarded; here the same flower is considered both beautiful and wonderful. The conditions, the surroundings are different. Don't you see—eh? Don't you?

DENES. Over there the sex question didn't enter the matter at all, but here every one seems to think that my one purpose is to wrong the girl. It's mon-

strous! It's damnable! (*There is a pause.* VON GUGGEN *smiles*) Do *you* think I have the slightest intention of wronging her? (*There is a pause*) Do you?

VON G. Not the slightest—at present.

DENES. What do you mean by—at present? (*There is a pause*) Tell me. I demand it.

VON G. Very well! She is like a wonderful and glorious jewel which has been given into your charge for safe keeping. Familiarity has accustomed you to its possession, and of its value and beauty you know nothing—at present.

DENES. Well? There's more! Go on!

VON G. Some day, perhaps quite by accident, the glory and value of this jewel will be revealed to you and then——! Then you will know the treasure that is in your possession and you will want it—for your very own.

DENES. It's a lie!

VON G. It is the truth! Why try to deceive ourselves about such things. We are Europeans, not middle-class English!

DENES. Damn it, I wish I hadn't come back here.

VON G. But, you *are* here. Don't you see. Eh? Don't you? (*There is a pause.* DENES *shows his perturbation*) And, why be anxious about it? Why trouble because the treasure is yours for the taking—with no one to question?

DENES. For God's sake, keep still, Von Guggen! Keep still!!

VON G. It is only natural that you should be impatient, but, why should I not say what I think? If I am right I *should* speak; if I am wrong you can laugh at me! (*There is a pause*) But, I'm right and you know it. You've been here only two days and already you have changed and she has changed! Already your eyes are open, already you——!

DENES. Good-night.

VON G. What?

DENES. Good-night!!

VON G. Good-night! (*He offers his hand. DENES doesn't take it*) Why not? It means nothing. It is only a matter of form? (*DENES still does not take it*) Very well. (*VON G. goes to exit*) Good-night.

(*VON G. exits. There is a pause. The closing of the door is heard. There is a pause. DENES, in pantomime, shows his state of mind. He paces about and finally puts out the lights with the exception of one burning on the desk. He lights a cigarette, opens a window and leans out, blowing the smoke of his cigarette in the air. There is a long pause. INNOCENT enters, wearing her night robe. She stands on the top of the stairs. There is a pause. She comes on stage silently—looks about—then sits down without a sound. There is a pause. DENES turns slowly, as if drawn by some magnetic object. He sees INNOCENT.*)

DENES. Innocent! (*He comes down stage*)

INNOCENT. How did you know I was here? I made no sound—I barely breathed, and yet—you knew? Why?

DENES. Never mind that! Why aren't you in your room?

INNOCENT. I couldn't sleep, I'm sure of it! I heard the door close and knew he was gone—and so—I came.

DENES. You must go back.

INNOCENT. Why? I couldn't sleep, Denes. It would be impossible.

DENES. But, you'll take cold.

(*DENES goes up, closes window, and comes down.*)

INNOCENT. No! The air is so mild, so delightful. My window is open, too.

DENES. The theatre—the people—everything—has excited you. Go to bed, dear. It will pass away quickly, and then you'll sleep.

INNOCENT. I can't stay in that room any more. The night is different here.

DENES. Different?

INNOCENT. Yes! In Mukden when night came everything was dark and silent. Here I see the lights.

DENES. Close the shutters.

INNOCENT. I did, but I see them just the same—thousands of them. And then—I hear music.

DENES. There's no music now.

INNOCENT. I hear it, though. At home when night came, I simply went to bed and died—here I live. *(She sits on the footstool)* Oh, I am so restless—*(She shivers)* and so cold.

*(DENES throws a drapery over her.)*

DENES. *(Severely)* You must go to your room, I tell you!

INNOCENT. Why do you speak to me like that—so harshly. Don't you love me any more?

DENES. Don't I——! You mustn't say such things to me. You mustn't!

INNOCENT. Why not? You do love me, don't you? You always said you did. Didn't you mean it?

DENES. Certainly I meant it.

INNOCENT. Well, don't you love me now? *(There is a pause)* If you don't I shall be dreadfully unhappy—because there is no one in the world to love me now but you—no one. *(She begins to cry)*

DENES. Don't cry, dear, please. *(Pause)* Please.

INNOCENT. Then tell me you love me. *(Pause)* Tell me.

DENES. I do love you.

INNOCENT. Really?

DENES. Of course I do.

INNOCENT. Ah! Now I am happy again. (*She nestles close to him. He moves away*) Why do you go away? You didn't before. (*There is a pause*)

DENES. Listen, dear. Things are different now.

INNOCENT. Different?

DENES. Yes. There is a change.

INNOCENT. So *you* have changed too.

DENES. Why—have *you* changed?

INNOCENT. Yes. I am a stranger to myself. It seems as though to-night I had become someone else.

DENES. Who?

INNOCENT. A woman who knows much! (*There is a pause*) And *how* have *you* changed?

DENES. I—I——! I can't explain.

INNOCENT. Oh, but you can.

DENES. No.

INNOCENT. You can! Sit here. (*She indicates a seat beside her*)

DENES. No.

INNOCENT. Please! (*Pause*) Please!

DENES. No, I tell you.

INNOCENT. Why? (*Pause*) Can't you even sit beside me any more. (*Pause*) Of course you can. (*Pause*) Here, Denes— (*She indicates the seat*) just to please me. (*Pause*) To please me! Come. (*She takes his hand and draws him to the seat. She leans her head on his hand*) How warm and nice your hand feels. How pleasant it is. It has such a soft, gentle touch. (*He smells the fragrance of her hair*)

DENES. What have you put on your hair?

INNOCENT. Perfume! (*Pause*) Don't you like it? (*Pause*) Horace bought it for me on the way to the opera. He said I was beautiful and should always use a little of it—not much—just a little.

DENES. Horace told you that?

INNOCENT. Yes, and other things too! And he gave me champagne and said if I were dressed as the

other women were, I should be more beautiful than any of them. He said—the man I loved would be the happiest man in the world.

DENES. Horace too! Even Horace!!

INNOCENT. Is it true? (*Pause*) Is it? (*Pause*) Do you think the man I love will be very happy! (*Pause*) Do you?

DENES. I—I—— (*The 'phone bell rings. DENES throws off the spell and answers it. At 'phone*) Yes! (*Pause*) Who is this speaking? (*Pause*) Von Guggen! What do you want? (*Pause*) No, I wasn't in bed! (*Pause*) Yes, she's here. What of it? (*Pause*) Don't you laugh at me like that. Do you hear—don't you laugh at me. (*Pause*) Oh, to the devil with you. (*He replaces 'phone*)

(*There is a pause.*)

INNOCENT. Do you think he'll be very happy?

DENES. You must go to your room—now—at once—understand—at once!

INNOCENT. Why are you angry with me? Did I do wrong to put the perfume on my hair?

DENES. Oh, it isn't that!

INNOCENT. Then, what is it? (*Pause*) What?

(*There is a pause.*)

DENES. I shall send you to the country—to-morrow—in the morning.

INNOCENT. I don't want to go to the country.

DENES. Just the same—you must go!

INNOCENT. Shall you come too?

DENES. Shall I come! Shall I——!

(*There is a pause.*)

INNOCENT. Yes. I shan't mind it so much—if you're there—with me. And you will be, won't you?

(*There is a pause.* DENES *realizes the situation*)  
You couldn't be so cruel as to send me there alone. I should die.

(*There is a pause.*)

DENES. You must not stay here a minute longer! Go!

INNOCENT. Don't be angry with me, please! Not to-night! (*There is a pause*) It seems as if I had never seen you before—as if we were really meeting for the first time—that my life, my *real* life with you were only just beginning!

DENES. What has come over you? Where do you get these ideas?

INNOCENT. In my room—a few minutes ago—a strange, a wonderful feeling came over me! I realized for the first time that when you had gone to bed—there—in the next room to mine—a man would be sleeping!

DENES. Yesterday you were just a child, tired at bedtime with your play! Yesterday you hardly knew the difference between night and morning! But, now——! How do you learn these things? How do you learn them?

INNOCENT. I don't have to learn them—I know them! (*There is a pause*) And I *am* beautiful—I know that, too. (*There is a pause*) And *you* know it. —Don't you? Don't you?

DENES. Yes. It's true—you're beautiful!

INNOCENT. And my eyes are as deep as a crater in which fire burns.

DENES. Yes.

INNOCENT. And my flesh is like the glossy gardenias in the tea houses.

DENES. Yes.

INNOCENT. And pleasure, dancing and music spring from my heart.

DENES. Yes.

INNOCENT. And the man I love will be the happiest in the world.

DENES. Yes, the very happiest!

INNOCENT. And I don't have to go to the country, do I?

DENES. No—you don't! You don't! (*He takes her in his arms*)

INNOCENT. I knew it—all the time.

### THE CURTAIN FALLS.

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### ACT III.

SCENE same as ACT II.

*The trunks have been removed and the room now looks prosperous and in good taste.*

*The time is morning some months later. It is summer and there are flowers about.*

*The stage is empty.*

*There is a pause.*

*The door-bell rings.*

INNOCENT enters.

INNOCENT. (*Calling*) Juliska! Juliska!

(*JULISKA enters.*)

JULISKA. Yes, Madame.

INNOCENT. The bell rang.

JULISKA. Perhaps it is the master.

INNOCENT. No. He has his key. (*She looks at a wrist watch she wears*) Half past eight! He has never been so late before. (*The bell rings*) Answer it.

(*JULISKA goes to answer bell. There is a pause. VON GUGGEN enters followed by JULISKA who exits. VON GUGGEN looks rather tired. He has in fact been up all night.*)

VON G. Good morning.

INNOCENT. You!

VON G. Exactly.

INNOCENT. Well, what's wrong?

VON G. Bela!

INNOCENT. Yes?

VON G. I've just come from the Casino. He has been playing all night—and is *still* playing.

INNOCENT. Losing?

VON G. Everything—not only money but—strength, life, years! He plays with all his might, with all his energy. It is a passion with him. Into each bet he puts his soul.

INNOCENT. Well?

VON G. Once he had over sixty thousand gulden—in half an hour he will have nothing.

INNOCENT. Nothing?

VON G. Worse. He will be in debt.

INNOCENT. How can that be?

VON G. When, some ten weeks or so ago, for reasons best known to himself he began gambling again, luck favored him and for a time he won. Later, however, it turned against him and for the past month he has lost heavily.

INNOCENT. But he told me that lately his luck had been neither good nor bad—that he was neither losing nor winning.

VON G. When a gambler tells you that, be sure

he is losing. (*There is a pause*) Well, the last time he played he left owing the proprietor sixteen hundred gulden and he had no more credit. Where he got the money he brought last night I do not know, but he did get it, and he began to play, very cautiously at first, and about one o'clock he was his own bank! Baccarat you know.

INNOCENT. Well.

VON G. He landed seven games, one after the other. His luck was marvelous and he played it to the limit. For a time he simply could not lose and each bet he won seemed to inflame him, to make him all the more eager for the next. When a great gambler is winning he is a man without emotions, he is merely a machine directed by a brain! Success serves only to give him more poise, more control; but Bela—Bela went drunk with it!

INNOCENT. You should have forced him to leave.

VON G. Irving tried it—he begged and implored, told him he had a fortune, but Denes said he was going to double it! They almost came to blows, but Irving would have had more chance of taking a starving dog from a bone! (*There is a pause*) Well, later on a little lunch was brought in, but it was served by a man whom Bela had not seen before. I shall never forget the look on Bela's face when he saw him for the first time. The man had one eyebrow higher than the other and Denes took it for an omen—an omen of bad luck!—A great gambler would have stopped immediately—but Bela looked at the man and laughed—defiantly—and played more recklessly than ever, nearly always on the five. Almost from that moment the luck turned! Call it what you please, chance, coincidence or anything you like, but such things are. All men who play the great games will tell you.

INNOCENT. And when you left everything was gone?

VON G. Not quite—but it will soon be so. It is inevitable.

INNOCENT. And I have a new dress for the races coming this morning. (VON GUGGEN *laughs*) Why do you laugh?

VON G. For *no* reason!

INNOCENT. There must be a reason and—(*The 'phone bell rings.*) Excuse me. (*She goes to 'phone. At 'phone*) Hello! (*Pause*) Yes. (*Pause*) He is not in just now. (*Pause*) Tell him *who* called. (*Pause*) Gottfried! What Gottfried? (*Pause*) Oh, he'll understand. (*Pause*) Very well. I'll tell him. Good-bye. (*She replaces 'phone. To VON GUGGEN*) Another thing. Why have *you* come to tell me this?

VON G. Because it brings me much nearer to you. (*He takes her hand*)

INNOCENT. Please. (*She withdraws her hand*)

VON G. To you and what I have been waiting for—since the first evening I saw you at the opera four months ago.

INNOCENT. Yes?

VON G. I have enough for two wonderful weeks—that is all, just two! Vienna, Paris, the Riviera Express to Nice or Monte Carlo. Together we will fly across the country, past the green cypress and the waving palms, and I will set you down in a palace of a hotel where you can live like a Princess, for two glorious, indelible weeks! What do you say? Eh? What do you say?

INNOCENT. You are proposing to buy me with a railroad ticket on the Riviera Express?

VON G. No, I am proposing an adventure!

INNOCENT. For two weeks! But—after?

VON G. Before the fortnight is over you will have made a conquest worthy even of you. It is certain.

(INNOCENT *laughs easily.*)

INNOCENT. No, no, my friend! You must look for

another partner! If I loved you, of course things might be different, but—I don't.

VON G. Neither do you love Bela. You have never loved him.

INNOCENT. Perhaps.

VON G. And you have known for a month that I have stayed here on account of you and that I was going to speak to you of this.

INNOCENT. I have known it for *three* months.

VON G. You could have stopped me had you wished.

INNOCENT. But I didn't wish. I was curious. I wanted to know exactly how I should feel on receiving such a proposition. My curiosity is gratified, but I'm greatly disappointed—it has neither thrilled nor shocked me in the least.

VON G. Another man in my place would have tried to overwhelm you with passion. (*He takes her arm and holds it tight*) I do not even tell you that I love you. (*There is a pause*)

INNOCENT. Again—please. (*She takes her arm away*)

VON G. Just the same—you'll come.

INNOCENT. And what will make me?

VON G. Poverty.

INNOCENT. What a horrid word.

VON G. Yes, it is cold and penetrating as a November morning! It would chill you to the bone. Have you seen a butterfly in the early days of spring crumple in a belated winter blast? Have you? Eh? That would be you.

INNOCENT. Oh, no! I should wait for the summer.

VON G. You *must* believe what I have told you. There will be no more pleasures for you, no riding in motors, no going to the opera, no drives to the races, none of the things which bring joy to your life. (*There is a pause*) You'll come, eh? Will you? Eh? Will you? (*There is a pause*) Here, I

will show you the kind of an adventurer I am! A night in Vienna, a night in Paris, and when we reach our destination you can do as you please. If you wish, I will disappear and leave you entirely free—free to try your beautiful wings! Now what do you say—eh? What do you say? (*There is a pause*) You must see that everything is finished so far as BELA is concerned. He will not even be able to play again and so—! (*The closing of the door is heard*) They mustn't see me. I will go out this way—but I shall come back for my answer. (*He exits. There is a pause*)

(BELA and IRVING enter. Both are in evening dress, but the front of BELA's is crumpled. IRVING is not looking very fresh, but BELA is much the worse of the two. He looks as though he had had a nerve-racking night.)

INNOCENT. Good morning.

(BELA doesn't speak.)

IRVING. Good morning.

INNOCENT. This is what might be called arriving early. (*To BELA*) You're pale as a ghost, dear. (*BELA is silent. To IRVING*) You're not nearly so bad, but then—you're generally the same.

IRVING. I don't play.

INNOCENT. I see. You only watch your friends. (*To BELA and speaking caressingly*) Did you lose or win? (*There is a pause*) You needn't answer. I see by your face that you lost. But never mind, dearie. (*She pats his face*)

BELA. There—there wasn't much difference—either way. I—I played—about even.

INNOCENT. That's good, dear! And now I'll see Juliska about breakfast.

IRVING. Not for me, thank you.

BELA. Nor me.

INNOCENT. Yes, dear.

BELA. Really I——

INNOCENT. I know best. (INNOCENT *exits*.  
*There is a pause*)

(IRVING *throws himself in a chair, lights a cigarette and puts the case on the table. He stretches out his legs and smokes. BELA sits in an easy chair, puts his elbows on his knees and holds his head in his hands. There is a pause.*)

BELA. If only I hadn't kept playing the five!

IRVING. (*Gently*) Still dreaming of the game, you gambler, you; still seeing the cards and thinking of the combinations. (*He goes to BELA*) Ah well, it was born in you and you can't help it I suppose. (*There is a pause*) What are you going to do?

BELA. I don't know! (*Savagely*) Oh, why didn't you stop me when I was winner; why didn't you stop me!

IRVING. I did my best.

BELA. You should have taken me away! You're no friend! If you were, when I had all that money in front of me—heaps of it, heaps—no matter what I said or did you would have dragged me from the table. But you didn't! You let me stay and lose it—lose it all—every thing. A friend! You a friend!

IRVING. (*Softly*) Bela—(*Pause*) Bela—(*There is a pause*)

BELA. You're right. You did your best.

IRVING. When you were so much ahead why didn't you pay the proprietor what you owed him?

BELA. I was afraid.

IRVING. Afraid?

BELA. Yes. Afraid to give him my lucky money.

IRVING. I see. (*Pause*) What have you left?

BELA. Nothing.

IRVING. This place?

BELA. Mortgaged to the top of the chimney.

(*Pause*) I'm selling the farm too.

IRVING. I wouldn't do that.

BELA. I must. I've already had an advance on it from the agent.

IRVING. The money you lost last night?

(*BELA nods.*)

BELA. He said he had a customer and was likely to close the deal at any time. It won't be much, probably four thousand or so.

IRVING. What are you going to do? (*BELA in pantomime shows that he doesn't know*) We must look this in the face. How are you going to live? (*Pause*) And what of—Innocent? (*Pause*) What are you going to do with her? (*Pause*) What?

BELA. You—mean?

IRVING. Won't you have to—give her up.

BELA. Give up Innocent! Let her—leave me?

IRVING. Yes.

BELA. I can't—I won't.

IRVING. I'm afraid you'll have to.

BELA. I won't I tell you! Life without her would be empty—nothing! I love her! I worship her. I want her to be looked at and admired; I want her to wear the handsomest gowns and the prettiest hats; I want her to have beautiful jewels—to be perfect from head to foot; I want other women to be envious of her and other men to be jealous of *me*; when I appear with her in cafes, at the races, at the theatre, I want all the other women to pale before her and all the other men to gaze lovingly at her while I thrill, and burn and exult with the thought—"She belongs to me! You can look, you can admire, you can envy, but she's mine. She's mine."

IRVING. And to get her the dresses, and the hats and the jewels, you have become—what you are.

BELA. Yes, and it's worth it—for I know that whenever I return here I shall find her, that she'll smile at me, and caress me, and lay her head on my shoulder and that nothing in the world matters but that—nothing.

IRVING. But she is ruining you, body and soul! And you know it! Don't you?

BELA. No! I don't.

IRVING. You do! And, though you may refuse to acknowledge it even to yourself, down deep in your heart you know that when you can't give her the things you have mentioned—she'll leave you and get them somewhere else.

BELA. It's a lie!

IRVING. It's the truth. (*There is a pause*)

BELA. (*Weakly*) My luck will turn. I'll get them for her.

IRVING. In what way? You have no position, no money, no credit; you won't even be able to play cards any more; you are ruined already! How can you get these things. How?

BELA. I will. You'll see.

IRVING. Wake up, Bela; for God's sake, wake up! You're asleep, or what is worse, you are blind. You can't get them honorably and you know it. (*There is a pause*) Come to China with me! McCormick was right, I couldn't be satisfied with England so I'm going back into the Chinese service. I'll get you a position and everything I have I'll share with you. You can begin life again and make a success of it. I'm leaving to-morrow. Come *with* me.

BELA. I can't! I know what you say is true and I want to go but—I can't—leave—her.

IRVING. Of course you can. Where is your strength of mind?

BELA. It's gone. I have none.

IRVING. Bela.

BELA. It's true. She's absorbed it. She's taken it from me as a sponge takes water from a bowl!

Once in order to get away—without her knowing—I packed my things at night—and just as I was ready to go—she stirred in the next room—and I heard her breathe—and the picture of her, lying there, came to me—and I didn't go—it was impossible. I couldn't have gone to save my soul from hell.

IRVING. That's madness.

BELA. Yes, that's *just* what it is—madness! And do you know who I feel constantly urging me on—her father.

IRVING. My dear chap, you must——!

BELA. Her father! He'll stare at me from a mirror—he'll appear in the smoke of a cigar—he'll spring suddenly from nowhere—and always he'll point his finger at me and laugh! Last night he came into the room with that new waiter and sat behind me. It was he who told me to bet on the five! (*He starts*) Look! Look! There he is in the mirror now. Don't you see him pointing at me? Don't you hear him laugh? (*BELA laughs*) He's laughing at *me*.

IRVING. Bela! Bela!!

BELA. But he shan't do it. I'll show him. (*He goes toward mirror*) I'll show you that you can't—that—that—(*He turns*) He's gone. Ah, there he is—going into that room. (*He points to the door where INNOCENT made her exit*) You can't get away from me like that! (*He starts to cross. IRVING tries to detain him*)

IRVING. For God's sake, Bela! (*BELA gets away from IRVING and goes to the door*) Come out, damn you, come out! (*BELA stands before the door with fist upraised. The door opens and INNOCENT appears*) And I'll—I'll—(*There is a pause. BELA looks at INNOCENT and slowly lowers his arm*)

INNOCENT. What is it, dear? What's the matter? (*There is a pause*)

(BELA draws his hand across his brow as though to brush memories away.)

IRVING. He's had a bad night. He's nervous—excited.

INNOCENT. I understand! Come, sweetheart. (*She takes his hand and leads him to a seat as though he were a little child being taken to bed*) Sit here, dear. (*He sits down*) What a collar! (*She takes off his collar and tie*) That's better! (*She rubs his throat a little and then his head. Very gently. He sighs his content*) And now I'll get you your dressing-gown. (INNOCENT exits to BELA's room. *There is a pause*)

IRVING. And that is worth *everything* to you!

BELA. Everything! Does life hold anything better? Heroes, poets, kings, beggars, all struggle, fight, conquer and strive, if only a woman is good to them. (*There is a pause*)

(INNOCENT re-enters with BELA's dressing-gown.)

INNOCENT. Here we are! Take off that black coat; it looks as though you were going to a funeral. (*BELA takes off his coat*) Now for this comfortable old thing. (*She helps him on with the dressing-gown*) And now, sit down again. (*She seats him in the armchair and makes him comfortable*) There. (*She stands beside him and strokes his hair. BELA takes her hand and kisses it*)

BELA. How good it feels to be like this—so restful and quiet. (*There is a pause*)

(IRVING looks at BELA and INNOCENT.)

IRVING. I'm leaving for Manchuria to-morrow.

BELA. You've decided definitely on to-morrow.

IRVING. Yes.

BELA. I'm sorry.

IRVING. So am I.

INNOCENT. Greet the little streets for me; the little houses, the century-old doors, with the market stands in front of them; the queer little apothecary; the whole dusty, pig-tailed people. Tell them that I am no longer little Innocent, that I am quite a wonderful lady now, and that I am going to the races this afternoon!

BELA. (*Tired—with eyes closed*) And that I am going to lose my friend.

IRVING. I must go. There's nothing to keep me.

INNOCENT. Then let's drink a little glass of Malaga on parting. (*She gets the wine, three glasses and a dish of figs*) I don't quite know how I came to like this wine. I don't really drink it, I simply moisten my lips with it. But I love to look at it and smell it. (*She pours out a glass for each, lifts her own to her nose and smells it in practically the same way that her father did. To IRVING*) Would you like something very good indeed? (*She sticks a fork into a fig, puts it into the wine and holds the glass in the sunlight which streams in from the window*) Look! There is nothing more beautiful than these colors. They are more glorious than the evening sky. They are like yellow flowers in the spring, like bull-rushes swaying in the wind; like gold brown eyes.

(*BELA, who has been sitting back, at this sits up.*)

BELA. (*To IRVING*) Did you hear?

IRVING. Yes.

BELA. (*To INNOCENT*) Where did you learn that?

INNOCENT. It came of itself, just as love comes of a summer evening.

BELA. Hadn't you heard it before?

INNOCENT. Not that I remember. Prosit young ones. (*They clink their glasses. BELA drinks his*

*wine.* INNOCENT *sips a little of hers.* IRVING *does not drink.* To IRVING) Aren't you going to drink with us?

IRVING. No, thank you. I don't like it. . .

INNOCENT. I'm sorry. (To BELA) Oh, some one called you on the telephone.

BELA. Who?

INNOCENT. He said his name was Gottfried. Do you know him?

BELA. Yes. I'll call him later.

(JULISKA enters.)

JULISKA. The dressmaker has sent your gown.

INNOCENT. Oh, splendid! Take it to my room. (JULISKA exits. To BELA) I'll put it on just for you. In a few minutes you'll be so proud of me. (BELA takes her hand affectionately. To IRVING) I hope you'll admire me too, although you don't seem to like me very much to-day. (To BELA) A few minutes and then you'll see. (She kisses BELA lightly, puts the fig between her teeth and exits. There is a pause)

BELA. Do you wonder I adore her? Isn't she delightful and charming? (Pause) Isn't she?

IRVING. Yes, she is! And couldn't her father be delightful and charming too! (Pause) Well?

BELA. What?

IRVING. Have you made up your mind?

BELA. Yes. While I was sitting there I was thinking and I've decided.

IRVING. You're coming *with* me.

BELA. No. I am going to marry Innocent.

IRVING. Marry Innocent!

BELA. Yes.

IRVING. It's impossible.

BELA. Why?

IRVING. How would you live? (Pause) Well, how?

BELA. I'll find a way.

IRVING. Bela, I'm your friend. - You know it, don't you?

BELA. Of course.

IRVING. Well, as your friend, as one who has only your welfare and happiness at heart, I ask you, I beg you, to put all thought of marrying Innocent away from you—absolutely.

BELA. What have you against her? Don't you think she is—true to me?

IRVING. I know she is. There has been no reason for her to be otherwise.

BELA. Reason! What do you mean? Tell me.

IRVING. It's a foolish thing to do—I know it—but I *will* tell you.

BELA. Well?

IRVING. So far as desiring the things of this world is concerned, Innocent will never go backward—she is bound to go forward.

BELA. Bound?

IRVING. Yes. The luxuries of yesterday will become the necessities of to-day and the things she thinks wonderful to-morrow in a month will be ordinary and commonplace. Hasn't this been so ever since you came here? Didn't you begin gambling again in the hope of getting her the things you knew you couldn't legitimately afford? What does she think now of articles that would have delighted her three months ago? Gowns, the price of which would have terrified her then, she orders now without even a thought. Is that true or isn't it?

BELA. It will be different when we're married.

IRVING. I see. You think the ceremony will completely change her nature! Is that it?

BELA. No. It isn't that—but——!

IRVING. What?

BELA. Oh, things will be different I tell you. She'll be my wife then, and I can introduce her into another circle.

IRVING. And will that make her satisfied to be dowdy. Will it make her any the less anxious to display her beauty to the best advantage?

BELA. She'll be my wife, and I can explain matters and she'll understand and do as I wish.

IRVING. If you honestly think that, I have nothing more to say! (*Pause*) Do you think it?

BELA. Well I——!

IRVING. You don't! You know you don't! You're trying to deceive yourself, to hypnotize yourself into believing what you *want* to believe.

BELA. Just the same I shall marry her. My mind is made up.

IRVING. I'm sorry.

BELA. We'll be happy, too. We'll get along all right. Things are different when you're married.

IRVING. Are you sure *she'll* marry *you*?

BELA. Of course I am. Aren't you?

IRVING. No.

BELA. What?

IRVING. In fact I'm sure she won't. I've been trying to save you the pain of finding it out.

BELA. Why won't she marry me?

IRVING. Because it won't be to her advantage.

BELA. You shan't speak of her like that to me. Do you hear! You shan't do it.

IRVING. Very well, we'll say no more about it. A wise man once wrote "No woman is worth the friendship of two men" and he was right.

BELA. "Not to her advantage!" What did you mean?

IRVING. Please.

BELA. You think she'll leave me for a more prosperous man, but she won't, she loves me. Even when I come home at this hour, don't you see how affectionate she is? (*There is a pause*) I shall marry her and begin a new life, and work hard and make a success. (*IRVING sighs and shakes his head*)

Why do you do that? I made a success in China, didn't I?

IRVING. *She wasn't in your life at that time.*

BELA. But she *is* now and that's all the more reason for me to work and succeed.

IRVING. And, granting that she *will* marry you, what then?

BELA. There's still the money from the farm. Gottfried may have some news for me.

IRVING. The man Innocent said 'phoned you?

BELA. Yes. I'll see. (*He goes to 'phone*) Hello! Give me seven thirteen! Yes, seven thirteen! (*Pause*) Hello! Is this Gottfried and Bauer. I want to speak to Mr. Gottfried please. (*Pause*) That you, Gottfried? This is Bela. Any news for me. (*Pause*) That's good. (*Pause*) What! only three thousand gulden! I expected at least four! (*Pause*) Wants a bargain doesn't he. (*Pause*) I don't know; it's too cheap. (*Pause*) If you're *sure* you can't do any better—(*Pause*) Yes, I suppose so—(*Pause*) All right, let it go. (*Pause*) Yes, close it up at once. (*Pause*) In half an hour—(*Pause*) Very well, I'll be there. Good-bye. (*He replaces 'phone*) He has a purchaser and I'll get three thousand gulden. It isn't much but it's better than nothing.

IRVING. You owe sixteen hundred. That leaves you twenty-four hundred.

BELA. Yes.

IRVING. And *on* it you're going to begin a new life.

BELA. Yes, I am.

IRVING. Again.

BELA. This is only the *fourth* time I've begun a new life, and in a way it appeals to me. It's like calling for a new deck. Luck sometimes turns with fresh cards and perhaps it will turn for me. (*He goes to IRVING and puts his arm over his shoulder affectionately*) And don't look so glum. Everything is going to turn out *all* right *this* time. (*He*

*shakes* IRVING *affectionately*) And don't worry about Innocent! She's young and naturally likes pretty things, but she loves me and we'll get along some way! See this—(*He fills the wine glass with water and holds it up*) Water has a hundred different colors too, even clearer and more brilliant than those of the wine. (*He puts the glass down*) You understand, don't you?

IRVING. Yes! I understand.

BELA. Good! And you'll find——!

(INNOCENT *enters wearing the new gown.*)

INNOCENT. Well, gentlemen, what do you think of it?

BELA. Charming! Beautiful!

INNOCENT. That's what I think too. (*She turns to the mirror and waves her hand*) My dear young lady, I am perfectly delighted with you.

(*She goes to the mirror and looks at herself. During the scenes she adjusts and rearranges the gown in a feminine way.*)

BELA. Innocent!

INNOCENT. Yes.

BELA. I have something to say to you.

INNOCENT. Well? (*Referring to dress*) I just love this color.

BELA. I'm going to marry you.

INNOCENT. (*Still at glass*) Are you? When?

BELA. This afternoon! or to-morrow! Which-ever you say.

INNOCENT. It doesn't matter. (*She smoothes out a wrinkle*)

BELA. Aren't you happy over it?

INNOCENT. Of course I am. I hope we have a lovely honeymoon. I'd like Monte Carlo or Nice! (*There is a pause*) This dress will help out with the

trousseau, won't it! (*She turns to BELA*) By the way, dear, the girl from the dressmaker's is waiting for the money. It's three hundred and seventy-five gulden.

BELA. Three hundred and seventy-five.

INNOCENT. Yes.

IRVING. (*To BELA*) There's the answer to your riddle.

INNOCENT. What riddle?

BELA. It was nothing.

INNOCENT. Haven't you got the money?

BELA. Certainly! But not here.

INNOCENT. A check will do.

BELA. I'd rather give you cash! Have the girl wait. I'll get the money and bring it to you. (*BELA goes to his room, avoiding looking at INNOCENT as he goes*)

INNOCENT. Did he lose everything last night?

IRVING. Everything.

INNOCENT. You mean he has *nothing* left?

IRVING. At this moment he hasn't the price of a meal at a restaurant.

INNOCENT. Then how will he get the money for the dress?

IRVING. It will be part of what he has left from the sale of his farm—the last asset he has in the world.

INNOCENT. Then he is ruined.

IRVING. Absolutely. (*There is a pause*) Innocent, I knew your father when you were a tiny child in the white colony at Mukden. Now we are both older and wiser and have our eyes open. Shall we speak frankly to each other?

INNOCENT. Yes.

IRVING. Leave this house, leave Bela. It is the only thing to do. I'll help you.

INNOCENT. Do you expect to go with me?

IRVING. Certainly not! (*Pause*) You'll do it?

INNOCENT. It seems the easiest thing. And yet I don't like to hurt him. He's been very good to me.

IRVING. It's the only way to save him. If *you* stay, *he* stays and the end for him is either jail or the gutter. If you *go* I can persuade him to come with me. It's for his good as well as yours.

INNOCENT. Oh, why didn't you drag him from the table last night when he had more than sixty thousand gulden in front of him.

IRVING. Who has been here? Who told you that?

INNOCENT. No one.

IRVING. Then how did you know?

INNOCENT. I *didn't* know. I guessed! And now I see I was right.

IRVING. Anyway he *has* nothing, and you can't live a life of drudgery and poverty, can you? (*There is a pause*) Leave him, this afternoon, and I'll give you money enough to take you anywhere you please and to keep you in comfort for at least two or three months! (*There is a pause*) Well?

INNOCENT. There's nothing else.

IRVING. And you'll go.

INNOCENT. Yes.

IRVING. Good. (*IRVING takes out his pocket-book, takes a check from it, writes on it and gives it to INNOCENT*) This afternoon, remember.

INNOCENT. Yes. (*There is a pause*) I wish I didn't have to—really I do! Bela loves me and——

(*BELA re-enters dressed for the street. He speaks with enforced gaiety.*)

BELA. (*To IRVING*) Come along. I'll go to Gottfried's and you can go to your hotel for some rest. You need it.

IRVING. Very well! Good-bye, Innocent.

INNOCENT. Good-bye, Horace.

BELA. It isn't far dear and I shan't be long. Have the girl wait.

INNOCENT. Very well.

BELA. Good-bye. (*He kisses her*)

INNOCENT. Good-bye.

(*BELA and IRVING exeunt. There is a pause. INNOCENT stands still as if pondering over something. JULISKA enters and starts to tidy the room. INNOCENT exits to her room. JULISKA continues her work, putting things to rights, placing the wine glasses, etc., in their proper places. There is a pause. VON GUGGEN enters from the entrance where he made his exit. He gives money to JULISKA.*)

VON G. Where's your mistress?

JULISKA. There.

(*JULISKA points to INNOCENT's room and exits. VON GUGGEN goes to INNOCENT's door and calls.*)

VON G. Innocent! Innocent! (*INNOCENT enters with hat and gloves*) Going to the races?

INNOCENT. Perhaps! How do you like my gown?

VON G. Superb.

INNOCENT. It cost three hundred and seventy-five gulden and the girl is waiting for the money. Will you pay for it?

VON G. Certainly.

(*VON GUGGEN's promptness rather surprises INNOCENT and she watches him. He takes out his pocket-book, takes some money from it and hands it to INNOCENT. She counts it.*)

INNOCENT. It's too much.

VON G. Tell the girl to keep the change.

INNOCENT. No. This is enough. (*She keeps one bill and offers the others to VON GUGGEN, who holds*

up his hand as if he does not wish to take it) Please.

VON G. Just as you say.

(INNOCENT rings bell. JULISKA enters.)

INNOCENT. Give this to the girl and take a receipt. (*She gives money to JULISKA who exits*)

VON G. I saw them leave but came in that way for fear one of them might be watching. When do we start. Eh? When?

INNOCENT. I haven't promised, and I don't know that I shall come.

VON G. Of course not! But that doesn't matter.

INNOCENT. After all there's something about you that I like! (VON GUGGEN bows) A certain air of bravado, of recklessness——!

VON G. I am glad that it appeals to you.

INNOCENT. Don't think for a minute that I'm in love with you.

VON G. I do not wish you to be. Love is a heavy piece of baggage, which no experienced traveler carries. (*There is a pause*) I shall have a motor waiting in front of the next house down the street. My things are ready. If it should trouble you, never mind about yours.

INNOCENT. I haven't promised remember.

VON G. You will come! Just before you leave, as a signal that all is ready, pull down the shade there. (*He indicates the shade*) Then I shall know that it is time to——! (IRVING enters) Hello! How did you get in?

IRVING. I still have my key. (*He holds up a key*)

INNOCENT. I thought that you were going to the hotel to rest.

IRVING. I remembered that my cigarette case was here and as I wished for a smoke and have few of my favorite brand left, I came to get it. (*He opens case and offers cigarette to VON GUGGEN*) Will you try one?

(VON GUGGEN *takes cigarette and lights it.*)

VON G. Thanks.

IRVING. These are Pyramios! We smoked them in Manchuria. Don't you remember?

VON G. No. I can't say that I do.

IRVING. Strange. I thought that you might.

INNOCENT. So you *were* watching.

IRVING. Yes. I wished to see if I could find you together—your friend who told you this morning, and you.

VON G. And have *you* anything to say against it?

IRVING. Personally, nothing! But Bela trusted you. Evidently you have no consideration for such confidence.

VON G. Not the slightest.

IRVING. Nor for friendship.

VON G. For friendship, yes! But at present I have only *one* friend. I have the greatest consideration possible for him. He is—myself.

IRVING. At any rate Bela trusted you. (*Referring to INNOCENT*) Just as he based his future on this whisp of straw.

INNOCENT. Didn't you say less than half an hour ago that I should leave Bela.

VON G. Certainly. He wished you to go with him.

IRVING. That's enough. Is this the way you repay my consideration—my forbearance! You seem to forget that it was I who saved you when you stole that jeweled clasp from the slipper of the Statue of Buddha.

INNOCENT. You *did* that.

VON G. And why not? I am a philosopher as well as an adventurer and I believe that things are put into this world to be used where they can do the most good and I am quite sure the jewel would have been much more useful to me than it could possibly have been to the statue. Buddha is dead. I am alive.

IRVING. I should have had you jailed but I let you go free. I did not wish the Chinese to know that a white man, a friend of the Consul, could be guilty of such a thing.

VON G. For what you did for me I thank you. But that is in the past and is no concern of the present.

IRVING. (*To INNOCENT*) Are you going away with this man?

INNOCENT. I have not decided.

VON G. I have. She is coming.

IRVING. (*To INNOCENT*) Then of course you will not need the check I gave you.

VON G. What check?

INNOCENT. He wished me to leave Bela and gave me a check to carry me along till I found some one else.

VON G. Good. You have found me.

IRVING. No indeed. The check was given for a very different purpose.

VON G. I do not see it.

IRVING. I do! (*He extends his hand to INNOCENT as if asking for the check*)

INNOCENT. Just a minute please.

IRVING. Well?

INNOCENT. All you wanted was that I should leave Bela. That was it, wasn't it?

IRVING. Yes.

INNOCENT. Well, what difference does it make to you whether I go alone—or with him or with any man—so long as I go.

VON G. Exactly.

IRVING. It makes this difference—I object to being done.

INNOCENT. Done?

IRVING. Yes—especially by him.

(*BELA appears at back, unseen by others. VON GUGGEN crosses to IRVING.*)

VON G. Will you oblige me by being a little more explicit?

IRVING. I think my words were sufficiently plain.

VON G. Perhaps I did not understand. Would you oblige me by repeating them?

IRVING. Certainly. I object to being done—especially——!

BELA. Hello—what's the matter? (*There is a pause*) What is it? (*Pause*) Well?

VON G. I came to get your permission to take Innocent to the races and found him here trying to induce her to leave you and go with him.

BELA. What!

IRVING. It's a lie.

VON G. It's the truth. *Ask* her.

BELA. (*To INNOCENT*) Is it?

INNOCENT. He's your friend dear.

BELA. Never mind that. Tell me. Did he do as Von Guggen says?

INNOCENT. Yes, he did.

IRVING. I didn't! You can't believe such a thing of me. You can't.

INNOCENT. He told me that you were ruined, and he said we would have to live in poverty, and he begged me to leave you and gave me a check to pay my expenses. I took it from him so that I might prove the kind of man he is in case he ever tried to turn you against me. (*She gives check to BELA. He looks at it*)

(*There is a pause.*)

BELA. (*To IRVING*) Well? (*There is a pause*) Well?

(*There is a pause.*)

IRVING. Listen, Bela!

BELA. Did you give her this check or didn't you? (*There is a pause*) Answer.

IRVING. Yes, I did! But——

BELA. Why? (*There is a pause*) To induce her to leave me?

IRVING. If you'll listen for just a moment, I'll——!

BELA. To induce her to leave me! Yes or no!

IRVING. I can explain it if you'll only——!

BELA. Yes or no!

IRVING. Yes. But on my word of honor I didn't intend to go with her.

(VON G. *laughs.*)

VON G. Of course he did! Of all the men I know you're the only one who hasn't realized that he's in love with her.

IRVING. You liar! (*To BELA*) You can't believe this man. He's a thief——

INNOCENT. I'm not and I say he speaks the truth.

IRVING. And I say he lies!

VON G. It is his word against her's—and the check.

INNOCENT. (*To BELA*) Which do you believe?

IRVING. Bela!

~ (*There is a pause.*)

BELA. (*To IRVING*) Get out!

IRVING. Bela!

BELA. I see many things now, among them why you wanted me to leave her. Get out.

IRVING. But I pledge you my word that——!

BELA. Go! (*He tears up the check*) Go! Do you hear! Go!

(*There is a pause.*)

IRVING. Very well. Good-bye! But some day you'll realize how wrong you are. (*IRVING exits*)

*(There is a pause.)*

INNOCENT. Dear. *(She goes to him. He takes her in his arms)*

*(There is a pause.)*

VON G. I hope that I acted for the best.

BELA. You did, and I thank you.

VON G. I am more than repaid! Innocent has told me she has changed her mind about going to the races, but I have a friend who has given me the use of his motor. Have I your permission to take her for a drive instead?

BELA. If she wishes.

VON G. *(To INNOCENT)* You will come?

INNOCENT. I don't think so.

VON G. Perhaps you will change your mind. If you do and decide to come you will let me know?

INNOCENT. Yes. If I decide to come I will let you know.

VON G. Then I shall be waiting. Good-bye for the present.

INNOCENT. Good-bye.

VON G. Good-bye, Bela!

BELA. Good-bye and thank you again.

*(VON G. bows to BELA and INNOCENT and exits.  
There is a pause.)*

BELA. Who would have thought it—of Horace.

INNOCENT. I know how it must hurt you.

BELA. I've no one left now—but you. Thank God you are still true to me.

INNOCENT. Sweetheart!

BELA. I could bear anything in the world except to be deceived by you.

INNOCENT. And I could bear anything except for you to stop loving me.

BELA. Stop loving you! Stop loving you! (*He takes her in his arms and kisses her passionately. There is a pause*) Listen, sweetheart. It's true what Horace said—I have nothing left but sixteen hundred corona out of which—! I forgot, that girl's waiting.

INNOCENT. Never mind, dear. I'll return the dress in a little while and send her away.

BELA. I wish you could keep it.

INNOCENT. But I can't. We're poor now and I must do my share.

BELA. Innocent——

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INNOCENT. Of course I must. You've done everything for me. I've done nothing for you.

BELA. Nothing! You've made me the happiest man in the world.

INNOCENT. Really.

BELA. The *very* happiest. I didn't know there could *be* such joy.

INNOCENT. I'm glad! (*She nestles closer to him*) Kiss me again dear—as though it were for the first time or as if you were bidding me “Farewell” for ever. (*He kisses her*)

BELA. My dear Innocent! My own little girl! You're still mine. You're still mine!

INNOCENT. Yes. I'm still yours.

BELA. And nothing else matters.

INNOCENT. Nothing.

(*There is a pause.*)

BELA. We'll begin everything anew! We'll be married and go away from the life here, from the city and its temptations, which I'm too weak to resist.

INNOCENT. Dear.

BELA. I am. I know it! But I still have some good friends in the Ministry at Ackerban, and I'll get a position in some foreign country and there we'll settle down and I'll work hard and make a success of life. You'll be proud of me yet.

INNOCENT. I've never doubted it.

*(There is a pause.)*

BELA. I'm so tired.

INNOCENT. You must be dear. The strain of last night and no rest since! Come and lie down—here. *(She leads him to the couch. He lies down. She makes him comfortable and sits beside him)* Now go to sleep dear, and remember that your own little Innocent is here by your side.

BELA. As she is going to be always.

INNOCENT. Yes, dear.

BELA. That's all I want. *(Drowsiness begins to creep over BELA)*

INNOCENT. Yesterday the ship which brought us from Trieste landed here again. Let us go away in her and I will sit by you on the deck and sing to you.

BELA. Where shall we go?

INNOCENT. Wherever the ship takes us.

BELA. How wonderful you are! What a shame I shan't be able to give you the beautiful things you deserve. I'd like to give you——

INNOCENT. Ssh! Ssh! You must sleep dear. *(There is a pause)* In the country or in the village where we shall live I shan't need pretty clothes. I shall probably be the only fine lady there! And think what a happy life it will be; to wander in the woods among the whispering trees, just the fresh green grass around us and peace and joy in our hearts! *(BELA sighs contentedly as if just dropping off to sleep. There is a pause. INNOCENT looks at him and then speaks as if she were leaving the decision to the fates)* Shall I leave you now? Or shall I stay with you? *(Pause)* Tell me. *(Pause)* Tell me.

*(There is a pause.)*

BELA. (*Drowsily*) The sunshine dazzles me.  
Pull down the shade please.

(*There is a pause.*)

INNOCENT. The shade?

BELA. Yes, dear.

INNOCENT. You want me to pull it down?

BELA. Yes, dear.

INNOCENT. You are quite sure.

(*There is a pause.*)

BELA. Yes, dear. Please.

INNOCENT. Very well. (INNOCENT pulls down the shade and the stage darkens. She goes again to BELA)

BELA. What was that little Chinese song you used to sing?

INNOCENT. The Tona Bungalay?

BELA. Yes. Sing it now—very softly—and I know I shall sleep.

INNOCENT. Yes, dear. (INNOCENT sits beside him and sings to him as though he were a child going to sleep. When she has finished she rises gently and puts on the hat she brought on earlier in the act. She looks at BELA pityingly, almost tenderly, then exits quietly)

(*There is a pause.*)

CURTAIN ON ACT III.

## ACT IV.

SCENE:—*Private dining room in a restaurant in Nice.*

TIME:—*Evening. Some months later.*

DISCOVERED:—*The second waiter busy at the table.*

*There is a brief pause.*

*First Waiter enters.*

*During the scene they busy themselves about the room.*

1ST WAITER. Everything—eet is ready?

2ND WAITER. Yes. Everything.

1ST WAITER. Good. His Excellency will be here now at any mineet.

2ND WAITER. I wonder eef it is the same lady—eh?

1ST WAITER. Of course. He has not been wiz any other lady since he first came wiz her—how long eez eet ago?

2ND WAITER. More than two months.

1ST WAITER. That is right! And why should he come with any other? Madame is beautiful! Young! Exquisite!

2ND WAITER. And His Excellency—he is fine too—Eh?

1ST WAITER. A wise man! He has seen everything that there is in life—and he has learned. He knows just what to say and what to do and when to say and how to do eet?

2ND WAITER. And there is no one more generous.

1ST WAITER. Why not? He is reech—very reech—and—he knows! To wait on some men—eet eez

degrading—to wait on such a man as His Excellency—eet eez a pleasure. He was born for such things!

2ND WAITER. Eef all our guests were like His Excellency, life would be so much——!

1ST WAITER. (*Warningly*) Ssh! They are coming!

(*They draw themselves up and stand stiffly behind the chairs at the table. There is a pause.*)

1ST WAITER. Perhaps there eez something I can do. (*He goes to door, looks off and sees them coming. He stays at the door bowing*)

{ HIS EXCELLENCY and INNOCENT enter, both in evening dress. INNOCENT is wonderfully gowned and wears exquisite jewels. She has gained in poise and manner. She appears happy and contented, as if fate had placed her in the sphere for which she was born and that she had neither sorrow nor regret. HIS EXCELLENCY is the perfection of distinction and manner. Between them there is shown from the beginning a thorough understanding, and a fine comradeship. He takes her cloak from her shoulders and hands it to the 1ST WAITER. She sits near an open window, through which is seen a beautiful garden. The 1ST WAITER offers the menu to HIS EXCELLENCY who declines it.)

HIS EX. Something very simple now. We are going to the motor parade and will have this room again on our return. (*The WAITER bows. To 2ND WAITER*) Some red roses and some cyclamen. (*The 2ND WAITER bows and exits. To 1ST WAITER*) Just bring an entree of lamb with wine sauce! (*1ST WAITER bows after each sentence*) Then some tomatoes—fresh of course—then a cold pigeon served with oranges—and a bottle of Chatteau Lafette '82.

If we need a sweet we will order one. (*To INNOCENT*) Does that meet with your approval?

INNOCENT. Yes, dear.

HIS EX. Good. (*To WAITER*) That is all. (*The waiter bows and exits*)

(*INNOCENT rises and goes toward HIS EXCELLENCY.*)

INNOCENT. I love to hear you order! You seem to *know* everything and how to *do* everything.

HIS EX. My dear child!

INNOCENT. Tell me, when you spoke to me the first time, how did you know it was my last franc that I had bet and lost?

HIS EX. Why have I lived! I knew it just as I knew that you would accept the five thousand francs I won on the bet I asked *you* to *place* for me! And though I am quite sure that you had never done such a thing before—permit me to tell you, my dear, that you took them like an artist.

INNOCENT. I *had* never done it before. And yet, when I *accepted* the money from you, it seemed as though it were the most natural thing in the world to do and not in the least humiliating or degrading! I don't think though that I could have taken it from any other man in the room. You had hardly seemed to notice me while they had all stared at me with appraising eyes.

HIS EX. To accept it was right. Fate has made you very charming, my dear. She has created you so that your nature demands an atmosphere of elegance. Without it you would be like a lamp that is extinguished. Fate has made you in fact a woman de luxe—therefore it is only proper that she should take care of you.

INNOCENT. I'm glad you think that—and that she sent *you* to do it.

HIS EX. I am more than glad.

INNOCENT. You are so restful; you give such

security! When I am with you I know that no matter what arises, you will always be in control of the situation and that you will handle it successfully without losing your poise or even raising your voice—in short, that you are the most dependable and most delightful person in the whole world.

HIS EX. You are very sweet to me to-night.

INNOCENT. And yet I don't know exactly how to regard you.

HIS EX. No?

INNOCENT. No. Perhaps that is what fascinates me.

HIS EX. I will tell you—regard me as—life.

INNOCENT. As life?

HIS EX. Yes, as the joyous philosophy of life which tells us to accept things as they are without asking why, and which teaches us to accept everything—even love and happiness—lightly.

INNOCENT. I know that you accept me—lightly.

HIS EX. I accept you as the greatest treasure that was ever entrusted to my keeping.

INNOCENT. And yet you don't love me—you never *will* love me.

HIS EX. You are mistaken dear—I do love you.

INNOCENT. Oh, no.

HIS EX. I do love you—not tempestuously I will admit! But aren't the placid blue waters and smiling skies of the Mediterranean preferable to the fogs and storms of the North Atlantic! Also there is much less chance of shipwreck, my dear.

INNOCENT. Perhaps you are right. (*The Waiters bring in the flowers, hor d'ouvres, etc. One waiter pours the wine*) Only a little for me. (*To HIS EX.*) The spring air makes me passive and dreamy.

HIS EX. I understand.

(*The WAITERS exeunt.*)

INNOCENT. I think of Mukden, where in the springtime, we floated on the water in Chinese junks. (*There is a pause*) Why don't you ever ask me where I came from and who I am?

HIS EX. Why should I? What possible good could the knowledge do! You are yourself and you are *here with me!* What else matters.

INNOCENT. You don't even know whether I have had one lover or many.' Don't you care?

(HIS EXCELLENCY *points to a jewel INNOCENT is wearing.*)

HIS EX. Have you ever wondered how many women wore that jewel before I bought it and gave it to you? Of course not. Why should you? (*There is a pause*) I happen to know some of its history! In its rough state it was dull and colorless and the man who dug it out of the earth threw it aside without a thought! Another man found it and, merely out of curiosity, took it to his home and polished it a little. Its color began to come and he showed it to a friend who promptly stole it and took it to a jeweler who lied about it and bought it for a fraction of its value. The jeweler polished it, cut it into an oblong shape, and sold it to a Maha Rajah who gave it to his favorite. This excited the jealousy of his queen, who had the slave killed and, so that her husband should not recognize the jewel, had it cut into another shape and placed in a different setting. During the Indian mutiny the palace was looted and it fell into the hands of an officer who took it to England, had it recut and gave it to his daughter as a wedding present. The daughter's husband, some time later, lost all his money and the jewel was sold. Since then it has adorned the hair of a duchess, the breast of a harlot and the finger of the wife of a South African millionaire, each of whom had it recut and re-set to suit her individual fancy. Finally it

came into the possession of one who was an artist and understood, the result being what you wear—a flawless jewel, exquisitely cut and mounted! Does the fact that the other women have owned it and worn it interfere with your happiness in its possession? Not in the slightest! All its adventures, all its vicissitudes have finally resulted in perfection—and that perfection is yours!

INNOCENT. You have a wonderful viewpoint and I've learned much from you already. Life with you has lifted up my head and enlarged my vision and now I see things from above instead of from below.

HIS EX. Again I am glad. Little life artist, your health and may your head *always* be exalted.

INNOCENT. Thank you. (*They clink their glasses and drink*)

HIS EX. After the motor parade we will come back here and then——!

1ST WAITER. (*Off stage*) No! No! I tell you. No one can go in there.

BELA. (*Off stage*) Just the same I'm going. I have the right.

1ST WAITER. (*Off*) You cannot go.

2ND WAITER. (*Off*) No.

BELA. (*Off*) I'm going I tell you.

(HIS EXCELLENCY *rings the bell*. 1ST WAITER *enters*.)

HIS EX. Who is that?

1ST WAITER. A—gentleman—who say he know Madame.

HIS EX. Let him come in.

INNOCENT. I'm afraid.

HIS EX. Show the gentleman in.

(1ST WAITER *exits*.)

INNOCENT. Who can it be?

HIS EX. There is no one who has the right to control you?

INNOCENT. No one!

HIS EX. Good! In any case it is better to *see* the gentleman! If there is a mistake it can easily be rectified; if there is anything to be adjusted it is much better to do it here than in public.

(1ST WAITER enters followed by BELA who is unshaven and presents practically the same appearance that he does in the prologue. There is a pause.)

INNOCENT. Bela!

HIS EX. (*To Waiter*) A chair for this gentleman. Make the order for three.

BELA. No!

HIS EX. Will you not do me the honor——

BELA. You don't know who I am.

HIS EX. It is enough that you are a friend of Madame. You will dine with us?

BELA. No.

HIS EX. I am sorry. (*The waiter exits*) You are nervous—upset—a glass of wine perhaps.

BELA. Nothing.

HIS EX. You know this lady, of course.

BELA. Know her! Ha! Know her!

HIS EX. And there is probably something which you wish to talk over with her. Will you excuse me?

INNOCENT. (*In alarm*) No! No!

HIS EX. There is nothing of which you need be afraid. (*To BELA*) You mean no harm to her, I am sure.

BELA. No. Of course not.

HIS EX. I have your word?

BELA. Yes.

HIS EX. That is enough. (*To INNOCENT*) There is no cause for alarm. Besides, I shall be waiting. (*HIS EXCELLENCY exits*)

(*There is a pause. INNOCENT partly regains her self-control.*)

INNOCENT. I'm sorry, Bela, more sorry than I can tell. (*There is a pause*) But why have you come? What do you expect?

BELA. I came—I don't know why—except that I couldn't help it! And I expect—nothing! (*There is a pause*) Won't you shake hands? (*She gives him her hand. He clasps it feverishly and kisses it*) To touch your hand again is something—to hear your voice—to look into your eyes—to—to—! Oh, my God, if you knew how I have suffered! If you only knew!

INNOCENT. My poor Bela!

(*There is a pause.*)

BELA. When I awoke, after you—left—it was afternoon—and I thought you had gone to the races—so I wasn't alarmed. But when evening came—when it grew dark—I couldn't understand—and asked Juliska if you had given her no message. Then something prompted me to enquire if you had returned the dress and she said that you had paid for it—paid for it with money given you by Von Guggen. I told her she lied and ordered her from the house but she showed me the receipt. Then I began to get afraid. I had a feeling as if the earth were dropping from under me and I was going down! Down!! Down!!!! It was horrible! (*There is a pause*) Even then I didn't understand what had really happened, but as night came on the possibility that you had gone began to dawn on me. I fought against it as a man fights against the thought that he is going insane. That you would leave me without a line, without a word, seemed incredible—monstrous! I couldn't believe it—I refused to believe it—and I went out into the streets, looking for you and expecting to find you, perhaps hiding behind a tree or sitting at some little table. I went about calling “Innocent,” “Innocent,” and when I saw a woman

who in the least resembled you, or who wore a hat or a dress like those I knew you had, I'd follow her and look into her face. Finally one woman screamed and I realized what I was doing! Even then I couldn't help going on, so I wandered about under the trees, searching here and there until finally a gendarme took me in charge and I was sent to the hospital! And how I wished that I could die there! (*There is a pause. INNOCENT in pantomime expresses her sorrow*) But I didn't die and after a while I was released and I realized that I must at least see you or I should *really* go mad, so I took what little money I had and went to Vienna, and Ostend and Paris. Finally I remembered how you loved beautiful things, and sunshine and flowers, and thought that you might be in Monte Carlo. By this time all my money was gone and I pawned what few things I owned and spent the last franc for a railroad ticket there. All the time, for days, when I wasn't begging my food or sleeping wherever I could, I haunted the Casino Gardens, and the entrance to the hotels and the restaurants. When I didn't find you I made up my mind to come to Nice so I walked here and this afternoon I saw you pass by in a motor. I tried to call your name but couldn't, but I knew you were here and that I should find you and I went about saying, "Soon I shall be with her. Soon I shall speak to her." About half an hour ago I caught sight of you again and guessing that you were going to dine, I tramped from restaurant to restaurant till I saw you at that window. And now I am with you—I've found you again— We're together—it's really, really you! And we're together—we're together!

(*There is a pause.*)

INNOCENT. And what do you want me to do?

BELA. Give me the chance to get back my pride,

my strength, my self-respect. No man will ever love you as I do. Come back to me. (*There is a pause*) Innocent—come back to me!

INNOCENT. (*Very gently*) And—what? (*There is a pause*) Well? (*There is a pause*) Do you imagine I could be happy in the life you have to offer. (*Pause*) Do you? (*There is a pause*) Do you really think that I could—or should—surrender the comforts and luxuries to which I am already accustomed and go with you to a life of poverty and drudgery? Look at me, Bela. Do you think that is what I am fitted for? (*There is a pause*) Of course you don't! And suppose I *did* go with you, what would be the result? Unhappiness—misery—and another parting.

BELA. No! No!

INNOCENT. It would be inevitable—and you know it. (*There is a pause*) I am sorry for you—I pity you with all my heart—I'll give you anything I have and do whatever you ask—except this. But I *can't* do this. I simply can't. It's impossible.

BELA. You could if you loved me. (*There is a pause*) Don't you love me? Don't you? (*There is a pause*) Oh, say that you do, even though we both know it's a lie.

INNOCENT. Bela!

BELA. Tell me that you love me just as I love you and that you'll go with me wherever I want to go! Lie to me! It will make me happy for a little while and then I'll be ready——! (*He takes a revolver from his pocket*) Ready to——!

(INNOCENT screams.)

INNOCENT. Bela! Bela!!

(HIS EXCELLENCY enters quietly. *There is a pause.*)

HIS EX. And I trusted you.

BELA. It wasn't for her. I was going to kill myself.

HIS EX. Not before a lady. It isn't being done! (*There is a pause*) Like anything else you possess, your life is your own to do with as you please, providing that your actions injure no one else. But no gentleman deliberately involves the woman he loves in a public scandal. He removes it from her just as far as he possibly can. You see, my friend?

BELA. Yes. I see.

INNOCENT. Promise me you won't do it. Promise me.

BELA. You *wouldn't* lie to me. Do you want me to lie to you?

INNOCENT. I want you to promise. Will you?

BELA. Yes. I promise.

INNOCENT. And you'll keep your word?

BELA. I'll keep my word.

INNOCENT. Thank you. (*INNOCENT turns away*)

HIS EX. (*To BELA*) Well done, my friend, well done. (*Aloud—indicating table*) Will you not stay now that everything is settled?

BELA. No. I must go.

HIS EX. Then, since you must, I know you will pardon my saying that it is rather evident that Fortune has not been kind to you of late, and you will excuse me if I suggest——! (*HIS EXCELLENCY takes out his purse and offers it to BELA*)

BELA. Impossible.

HIS EX. Why?

BELA. I'm not a beggar.

HIS EX. Neither is any other man who accepts a gift from a friend.

BELA. But—money?

HIS EX. What difference does it make whether it is the money itself or the thing that it buys? (*He takes BELA's hand and puts the purse into it. This is the purse BELA has in the Prologue*) Permit me. (*There is a pause*) You will need it.

*(There is a pause.)*

BELA. Very well.

HIS EX. I thank you.

BELA. And now—good-bye.

HIS EX. Good-bye, my friend.

BELA. Good-bye, Innocent.

INNOCENT. You promised, remember.

BELA. I'll remember.

INNOCENT. Then—good-bye.

*(He kisses her hand, looks into her face, and exits.)*

INNOCENT cries. HIS EXCELLENCY comforts her. The first Waiter enters and goes to the table as if to clear it.)

HIS EX. You need not serve! Have my car ordered and be sure you save this room for us to-night.

1ST WAITER. Yes, your Excellency. *(The Waiter exits)*

*(There is a pause.)*

INNOCENT. I'm so sorry for him.

HIS EX. So am I. *(HIS EXCELLENCY gets INNOCENT's bag which she has left near the window and takes it to her)* Don't cry dear. It can do no good. *(He gives her the bag. She takes a handkerchief from it and wipes her eyes. He gets her cloak)* And now, before the parade, we will go home for a little while.

INNOCENT. Home! Why?

HIS EX. You will wish to bathe your eyes. *(He puts the cloak about her)*

*(They exeunt. There is a quick change to the scene of the Prologue and the Epilogue begins.)*

## EPILOGUE.

*The Scene is the same as the Prologue.*

*HORACE is discovered reading the diary.*

(*Reading*) “ Read these few lines in a loud tone so that my dear heart may hear them, for already in the distance I see the shores of the River Styx, the banks of the Dalnys. If this were to fall into hands other than yours I should be thought weak and unmanly, but something tells me that no one will see it but you and with your nature I know you will understand. Fate was stronger than I was—that was all. It took me in its hands and crushed me and then everything vanished into the dark night. What has happened was predestined from the beginning and it was useless for me to struggle against it. At least, that is as *I* understand it, but I may be wrong. Who knows? Who knows?

CURTAIN ON THE PLAY.



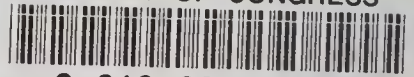








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